TEACHING PRIMARIES IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL

ETHEL L. SMITHER

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TEACHING PRIMARIES IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL

ETHEL L. SMITHER

A Textbook in the Standard Course in Leadership Training, outlined and approved by the International Council of Religious Education

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

"THE curriculum is ninety per cent teacher." This assertion is being made by Christian educators with more and more conviction. If the statement is essentially true, the development of a consecrated and skilled staff of leaders is the first responsibility of a teaching church. The past decade has witnessed a rapid improvement in curriculum materials, and many have expected that, in some mysterious way, teaching methods would advance automatically. But, too often, these better materials in the hands of untrained leaders have produced disappointment and discouragement. The training of leaders for the teaching task must parallel the introduction of higher types of curricula.

Denominational education boards are therefore laying greater stress than formerly upon the training of a leadership qualified for the educational work of the local church. Their efforts, through both denominational and interdenominational channels, have not been without reward. The past ten years have seen a remarkable growth in the number of leaders in training. The chief problem confronting the friends of leadership training to-day is that of how to develop actual skill in teaching rather than a mere verbal acquaintance with a few psychological laws.

The total program of training carried forward by the denominations, severally and co-operatively, includes four leadership curricula—The International Reading Course, The High School Leadership Curriculum, The Standard Leadership Curriculum, and the

Advanced Leadership Curriculum. Each of these has its distinct purpose and field.

The Standard Leadership Curriculum, for which this text is prepared, is designed for the training of all persons who are engaged in leadership in any phase of the local church's educational program. It is organized on the basis of course units, each of which covers not less than ten fifty-minute periods. Each student in training, in order to receive a Standard Leadership Diploma, must complete twelve courses. Of the twelve courses required for the diploma nine are prescribed and three are elective. Of the nine prescribed courses, six are general and three are specialization units.

In making available for this total leadership-training program materials which are educationally sound and relatively inexpensive, the Leadership Training Publishing Association is rendering a unique service. This Association is an unincorporated group of representatives of the educational, editorial, and publishing agencies of "such evangelical denominations as may desire to co-operate in the purposes of the Association," which are "to prepare and publish through the denominational houses materials needed in the conduct of the leadership-training program of the co-operating denominations." Through its various committees the Association selects writers, circulates outlines and manuscripts for rigid criticism, and publishes those which meet the high requirements of the present-day training program. The books already published are evidence of the past success and present standing of this co-operative Association.

This text, TEACHING PRIMARIES IN THE CHURCH SCHOOL, is intended as a guide and source book for students pursuing course-unit Number 32, "Primary

Materials and Methods," which is one of the required specialization units for teachers in the Primary Department of the church school. It has been prepared both to set forth a high standard in methods and at the same time to present them in a way which is plain to the average church-school worker. It is more than a body of reading matter, since it includes many items designed to make the training course a real experience in thinking, in observation, and in practical activity on the part of the worker in training.

The author, Miss Ethel L. Smither, was nominated because of her many qualifications in this field. She has had excellent training in undergraduate and graduate schools in the field of education. Her experience, both in public-school teaching and in twelve years of field and editorial service in Elementary Work for three of our strongest denominations, has given her a wealth of background from which to write this text. As an author she has written Primary Course II of the *Closely Graded Church School Lessons* and several other courses for Primary children.

It is the expectation of the Leadership Training Publishing Association that this text will meet with hearty approval and that it will be the means of greatly increasing the efficiency of many Primary leaders in our church schools.

ERWIN L. SHAVER, *Chairman,*
Editorial and Educational Section.

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

THIS book has been written with the hope that it will help other religious teachers of Primaries to learn better how to guide the growing Christian experience of children six, seven, and eight years of age. Among the religious teachers of children the writer includes parents as well as those teachers who influence children during the time spent in the church school. All adults who touch deeply the lives of children are teachers of religion whether they will to be so or not. This is true, since children imitate our very thoughts and attitudes as well as our words and conduct. We teach Christian values or ways of looking at life as we share life with children day by day.

Again this volume is planned as a source book to be consulted instead of as a mere textbook to be mastered during the brief session of one training course. It is hoped that the leader of the training class and her students will select from it those materials most needed to meet the pressing teaching problems of the members of the training class. The training-school instructor is not expected to attempt to teach everything in the book during the short period of one training school.

If the book is really to become a helpful source book, the training-class leader will help by encouraging her students to continue to study it after the sessions of the training school are ended. She will suggest that the students consult it whenever it may bring light to bear on some problem of their local primary classes.

The reader will become increasingly aware of the de-

liberate repetition of emphasis on the point of view of teaching in each chapter. The writer has sought to show the point of view—guiding Christian living—at work and has attempted to put new meaning into familiar subject matter and method by showing how this approach to teaching utilizes material and method in new ways.

THE AUTHOR.

June 1, 1930.

CHAPTER I

WHAT SHOULD PRIMARY CHILDREN LEARN?

Objectives in Religious Education

Introductory Study

1. Name five important interests of Primary children. What examples can you give to illustrate each interest?

2. What have you found to be important mental and emotional limitations of Primary children?

3. (*a*) Can you remember your idea of God when you were a young child (under nine)? Where did you get this idea?

(*b*) Recall ideas of God which the Primary children whom you teach have stated.

4. Ask several Primary children these questions: "What is the Bible?" "About what does it tell?" What do you learn from their answers?

Why Do We Teach in the Church School?

Mrs. Abbott, the Primary superintendent of Mercerville Sunday school, answered her doorbell one Sunday afternoon. There stood Miss Green, one of her teachers.

"I have come to ask you an important question, Mrs. Abbott," she said, eagerly.

"Maybe we can find the answer if we think together," replied Mrs. Abbott, as she led the way to the living room. "What is this important question?"

"The longer I teach in the church school," replied Miss Green, "the more I feel that I should have some

definite ends in view. Of course I want to help my children to be as Christlike as Primary children can be, but that seems so indefinite. I should like to know just what I should teach to help the children to grow in Christian ways of living, thinking, and feeling. I have so little time and I want every minute to count."

Mrs. Abbott waited a moment, then she said, slowly, "I think every parent and every teacher who regards the religious growth of children seriously asks your question, 'What should I teach?' many times. No one knows the complete answer, I imagine. Let us see if we cannot study your question so that we may use our time with the children in the most helpful ways."

Primary Interests

"I have heard that we must start with the child's interests, the natural drives back of his behavior," said Miss Green. "So I have been spending some time each week on the playground and have been watching my little niece and nephew and their playmates at home. I have recorded their interests."

"I should like to hear what you have written," said Mrs. Abbott.

Interest in Persons, Play, and Pets. "First," said Miss Green, "I found that Primary children are interested in other Primary children chiefly because they can play together happily. I have seen Jean and Billy learn to act for the good of the group rather than for selfish reasons so that their playmates would continue to play."

"That is natural," said Mrs. Abbott, "for the real life of a Primary child is his play life. The children next door spend hours in play, and, watching them, I often see religious problems arising. Have you

noticed how dramatic and imitative children are in play? They really mirror our daily lives."

"Last summer I saw children in the country make hay and farm," said Miss Green. "Is that what you mean?"

Mrs. Abbott nodded. "Our city children play what they see too."

"Yes, over at the playground they are building a garage."

"Like the one being built on the corner, I suppose," replied Mrs. Abbott, smiling. "Primary children are not only interested in children of their own age," she continued. "Their attitude toward a baby is lovely. Even facial expressions change when they see one. It is a most important interest to develop because it helps them to learn to be tender and to respect the rights and welfare of another weaker than themselves."

"Then the children are interested in grown persons," said Miss Green, "in their public-school teachers and in us and in their fathers and mothers. They are so interested in the public workers, like the street construction gangs, and through their school experience they become interested in other peoples and in their customs."

"Did you see Joan show me the book on Chinese life that she had found in the school library?"

"Yes, she was pleased when you showed your approval of her interest too," answered Miss Green. "Children want adults to approve of what they do."

There was a noise on the lawn outside, so the two women went to the window. Some Primary children were playing hide-and-go-seek. A collie puppy romped about them awkwardly.

"The Primary child's attitude toward a pet is very

like that which he has toward a person," commented Mrs. Abbott.

"It is?" asked Miss Green. "Then that is why my teacher's book says any cruelty to animals may easily lead to habits of cruelty to persons; and any care of pets may lead to habits of consideration for persons; I had not understood before."

Interest in Stories, Activity, and Collections. "How interested the children were in the story you told this morning," she continued. "I have noticed that the stories which appeal to them most are those which introduce them to different peoples or give fascinating accounts of animal life or are fanciful."

"Did you notice their interest in the Mexican objects which Mrs. Branch brought back from her trip. They seem to like so to handle, see, and even smell. I think they learn a lot through the senses," added Mrs. Abbott.

"They like materials for manipulation such as clay or modeling wax too," commented Miss Green. "Think of that Oriental house my children made. I found Edward busily making a little Oriental lamp out of clay to go with it. He had found a picture of it in a book on our reading table."

"Yes, the children are interested in activity," answered Mrs. Abbott. "I have seen children so interested that they would have suffered fatigue unless calmer attractions had been gently introduced. Just see how that group is never still a minute!" and she pointed to the group on the lawn.

"Their activities use large muscles rather than the smaller ones which are still undeveloped," said Miss Green. "For that reason I never ask the children to work with small pieces of paper or to do work requiring

real skill. The older Primary children are beginning to be interested in collections too. In Miss Jones' class a number of the boys are making collections of smooth stones."

"This review of Primary interests has been really helpful," said Mrs. Abbott. "Shall we continue it until we find some answers to your question? For the next teachers' meeting will you prepare a study of the abilities of Primary children? I shall ask Miss Jones to prepare one on their limitations."

"I shall be glad to try," said Miss Green, as she started home. "This afternoon helped me to think of my children much more clearly."

Primary Capacities

Able to Live in a Larger World. At the next teachers' meeting Miss Green read as follows:

"What are the evidences that Primary children are developing rapidly? First, the child has a growing sense of his own individuality. This is his response to the new demands of school life. He must make more decisions for himself now, go to and from school alone, and meet with children from other homes whose standards are quite different from his own. He has to learn to compare standards and find new ways of acting. Our young adventurer is coming into contact with a new authority—that of his teacher at public school. He is having to adjust himself rapidly, and most of his religious needs arise in his efforts to live successfully through a period of change. Out of all this change grows an increased ability to take care of himself and be more useful."

Learning to Read and Write. "Then new interests are opening, for he is learning to read. The third-

grade children seem to read with little difficulty, though the public-school teachers tell me that they have not entirely mastered reading habits. They are learning to write, though more slowly."

Learning Greater Self-Control. "They can listen for a longer period and sit still, think about a more difficult problem or carry out a larger purpose. They show more ability to act as members of a group. There is more control of the body so they can help in their homes as no pre-school children could. They have an increasing ability to understand the difference between fact and fancy."

"I have been thinking of my own children as you read," said Mrs. Brown, one of the first-grade teachers. "You have described just what happened to all three of them after they started to school."

Primary Limitations

"Now let us see the other side of the picture," said Mrs. Abbott. "Miss Jones is going to tell us about what the limitations are." So Miss Jones read:

Reading, Writing and Expression Limitations. "While the Primary child is developing rapidly, do not let us forget that he has limitations. In spite of his progress he is still a young child. While he can read and write, he cannot read and write well. Often my nephew will begin to read a story and become so interested in the plot that he will urge his mother or me to finish it, since he is irritated by his own slowness. Even third-grade children write crudely. The third-grade public-school teacher says that it is a waste of time to plan work which requires any amount of writing because the smaller muscular connections in the hands are still undeveloped. This applies to the eyes

also. It is difficult for Primary children to do any reading which requires the rapid use of the eyes.

"Primary children have limited ability to express themselves easily in sentences. Ask them to do so and they often become shy and unhappy."

No Understanding of Symbols. "Primary children do not understand symbolic teaching."

"That is why we no longer use hymns like 'God, Make My Life a Little Light,' or prayers like 'Jesus, Tender Shepherd, Hear Me,'" suggested Mrs. Abbott.

"Yes, light to a Primary child means just light," continued Miss Jones. "It does not describe a spiritual condition nor does any other symbol carry a spiritual meaning."

Little Time or Space Sense. "Primary children also have little idea of time and space. I have found that trying to teach material arranged according to time is useless. David and Joseph, Samuel and Jesus might all have lived at the same time so far as Primary children can judge. They cannot recall over long time periods. So they must be helped constantly to see meaning in what they are doing in order that they may carry out their own purposes."

Physical Limitations. "The school nurse tells me that Primary children are in the 'fatigue period.' The heart grows more slowly than the body, and the child should never become seriously fatigued. He needs safeguarding from contagious diseases, to which he is so susceptible and which can be avoided. She says that protecting the children from these diseases is one of the important responsibilities of the church school as well as of the home and public school."

Emotional Immaturity. "The most important limitation for the teacher of religion to understand is the

Primary child's emotional immaturity. The religion of a Primary child differs greatly from that of an adult. His very lack of experience makes this true. Just as we adults differ from each other because of our differing ability to respond, so children are not like adults. If we teach beyond their ability to respond emotionally, we only confuse them or force them to develop too quickly and to become superficial."

Emotional Assets. "These children have emotional assets, however. It seems to me that the Primary child's lack of prejudice, friendly attitude to the adult, quick response to weakness, hunger, or suffering from cold, are most valuable qualities religiously. The ability to respond in these ways is fundamental to the Christian life, as Jesus so often emphasized."

"Thank you both," said Mrs. Abbott. "Miss Green, I think we are ready to talk about your question now—'What should I teach to help the Primary children grow religiously?'"

"Why, that is my problem too," said Mrs. Brown.

"And mine," "And mine," agreed several other teachers.

Plans for the Next Meeting

"Shall we make a study of objectives then?" asked Mrs. Abbott. "This study of Primary children is very helpful as a basis, for we must keep the children in mind as we try to find our aims."

"My teacher's book," replied Mrs. Brown, "lays much emphasis on what a child should learn of God. I should like to discuss that objective."

"That is a most important objective," replied Mrs. Abbott. "We must understand Jesus' teachings about God ourselves, as a first step. Then we may guide the

children into a helpful growing knowledge of God, increasing love for him, and chances to act in ways pleasing to him. Mrs. Brown, will you help us think of what seem, to his teachers, to be a Primary child's needs of God? Each one of you read what your teachers' books say on this subject, as that will help us to include all important needs."

Ideas of God for Primary Children

Value of Criticizing Teaching. At the next meeting Mrs. Brown began the study of Primary children's ideas of God.

"It seems to me," she said, "that we teachers must criticize what we say to the children to be sure that we are revealing God in ways which are true to Jesus' teachings. We should be careful also to avoid the use of adult language that puzzles a child instead of helping him to understand. I can recall many times when I have blundered as a teacher and a mother at this point."

Learning to Know God By Sharing a God-Like Life. "By a child's learning and understanding I do not mean listening to a teacher as she talks about God or tells stories about him. We are told that children best learn to understand God when they act towards others and face their daily problems in ways pleasing to God. So our first problem in religious teaching is to discover godlike experiences for children. Christian teaching is not primarily a series of instructions in facts about God. It affords chances to live godlike lives, information about God being given in the midst of the living. That is why the home is the great school of religion. We church-school teachers can share with children another kind of group life saturated with

God's presence, that of the class and church, and this is necessary too."

"What a challenge to teachers to live better Christian lives!" exclaimed Miss Green. "But I agree with you. We teach the Christian life, first of all, by living it with the children."

A Good God Who Expects Goodness. "Let us think of what ideas of God are helpful and possible for Primary children," continued Mrs. Brown. "Primary children should learn that God is good, and that they must be good because they are God's children. From my own children's remarks, it seems to me that an idea of God's goodness very precious to a Primary child is that he wants no child to suffer, be hungry, or perish, and that he expects his children to work together for their common good."

Finding God's Goodness in Every Experience. "I like to think that the children feel that God is with them in every simple joy, sorrow, or moral struggle. During the time of the World War many of us were shocked by Donald Hankey's report of how far away God was, in the thoughts of many of the soldiers, from righteous living and daily deeds of goodness. Shall I quote what he wrote? 'Here were men who believed absolutely in the Christian virtues of unselfishness, generosity, charity, and humility, without ever connecting them in their minds with Christ.' . . . 'They [the chaplains] did not grasp that the men really had deep-seated beliefs in goodness, and that the only reason why they did not pray and go to Communion was that they never connected the goodness in which they believed with the God in Whom the chaplains said they ought to believe. If they had connected Christianity with unselfishness and the rest, they would have been

prepared to look at Christ as their Master and their Saviour."[1]

"I feel that we must help other generations to avoid so unchristian an idea of God. How can everyday life and religion be divided one from another when children are learning to serve God through every act of life? The church school should not duplicate the work of the public school, of course, but it has the especial task of helping to lend religious meaning to the important interests and activities which the public school stresses as well."

A God Who Cares. "The children need to learn that God cares about them too, and loves them. His care gives them a sense of security."

"I want to teach Primary children that God cares too," commented Miss Morgan, "but is there no danger of them thinking of God as a sort of a magician who will protect them regardless of how reckless they are? My friend who teaches a Primary class in Allentown told me of a little girl who dashed in front of trucks several times one afternoon to the horror of the neighbors. Her mother had been called away by sickness. The child said that God would take care of her no matter what she did, that her Sunday school teacher had said so. Surely, that is not developing a reverent trust in God. Then, too, is there no danger of children expecting God to break the laws of his universe to care for them? Tom told me on our picnic that even if he drank from the infected spring, God would keep him from getting the fever. How do you safeguard the children at both these points and still teach them that God cares?" Miss Morgan concluded.

[1] Taken by permission from Donald Hankey's *A Student in Arms*. Published and copyrighted by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York City.

"They are certainly points that need to be safeguarded," said Mrs. Abbott. "For a really Christian trust in God cannot develop when a child has so irreverent an attitude toward God's care. Mrs. Allen seems to have suggestions. What are they?"

How God Cares. "I have found," Mrs. Allen began, "that the children need to understand how God shows love and care. I try to teach them that God helps to care for them through persons—fathers, mothers, teachers—through their own obedience to commands, and through their self-control. As they grow older they begin to be interested in discovering and obeying God's laws. Seeing how God's protection works in nature helps also. I have found that a simple study of protective coloration increases a third-grade child's understanding of care. Then the children must learn to work with God in helping to care for others. I think this increases their understanding of his care of them. A Primary child may learn that God gives to his children the bounties of life also. Otherwise he may take these good gifts for granted and never develop a sense of gratitude to God. I like to have the children find evidences of God's care in beauty too as well as in truth and in goodness, to feel that the beautiful outdoors is God's gift to his beauty-loving children."

"Thank you for helping us," said Mrs. Abbott. "Will you continue, Mrs. Brown?"

The Father of All. "The Primary child may learn gradually that God is the heavenly Father of all children and that he loves his children equally," read Mrs. Brown. "It is very hard for children to accept God's love for other races or nations at times. 'God must be an American,' my Joe said to me. Gradually they will begin to think of themselves as members of God's

world family if we teach carefully. A child's understanding of God as a spirit probably is helped to develop when he sees God able to care for all his children, not limited by time or space."

Fellowship With God. "Worship becomes more genuine when the children learn that God is pleased when they seek fellowship with him and is interested in what they do. They will be challenged to worship by the thought that they can help to do God's work in the world. They should be taught that God gives them strength to meet successfully the problems of their daily lives and that they may seek strength from the Father any time and anywhere."

A Forgiving Father. "Should not the children learn that God is near?" asked Miss Jones. "I want them to learn also that God does not punish his children willfully or tyrannically, but he seeks their good. He forgives them when they are sorry for wrongdoing, for he is not revengeful."

"How necessary that is!" said Miss Green, "and sometimes it seems to be the hardest lesson for children to learn. They are so sure there must be some form of 'getting even.'"

"We speak of God as a heavenly Father, a forgiving one," said Miss Morgan. "Would you call him by that name if a child had a brutal or even an irritable or autocratic father? I am thinking of the Porter twins who are in my class. We all know what a brilliant, upright man Mr. Porter is. Yet the psychiatrist at the clinic told their mother that most of their numerous sick spells are a result of the children's nervous uneasiness. Their father's idea of his duty is to act like an autocratic tyrant toward them. I should not want any child to think that God was like that. On the other

hand, I would not want them to think that God was foolishly indulgent."

"You have raised a good question," said Mrs. Abbott. "Find out what the word 'father' means to a child before you tell him God is a heavenly Father. Sometimes I have found it wise to say that God was like a mother or like the wisest, best, and most lovable person the children knew."

God in Terms of the Best. "Your last statement brings a recent home problem to mind," said Miss Jones. "Joe has made my sister very anxious. She told him that God was even better than his father, and Joe replied, 'He couldn't be; no one could be better than my daddy.' She came to me for help. I told her that so long as Joe connected God with the very best, highest, and most beautiful he could imagine, there was no need to fear that his ideas of God were not developing. Was I correct?"

"We cannot expect children to have mature ideas of God," said Mrs. Abbott. "Are not our own ideas of him becoming more spiritual as our religious lives deepen? Our task is to see that the child's ideas of God keep pace with his expanding life and are always connected with the best he can understand or feel."

"My own little girl, Betty, puzzles me," said Mrs. Allen. "She speaks of God as if he were a big man. Is that a natural stage in a child's developing idea of God too?"

"I think so," answered Mrs. Brown. "Each of my children passed through it. Now they are gradually coming to think of God as a spirit. I think it is natural for little children to hunt for God or for pictures of him. My children did. I remember how often George and Anne used to bring me pictures

and ask, 'Is this God?' I would not have discouraged their search, since searching for God is one of the great adventures of mankind. I tried to tell them God is a spirit, but I know now that a child has to grow mentally and emotionally before he can understand that. Then I told them that God's Spirit is everywhere helping his children act and think in kind and beautiful ways. As soon as I put the idea in terms of activity both children seemed to understand better."

"How like what my nephew said!" exclaimed Miss Green. "He is thirteen now. Last summer he said, 'I used to wonder what "God is Love" meant, Aunt Mary. Why didn't they tell me God loves you or God does loving deeds? I would have understood then.'"

Unchristian Ideas of God. "I am very sure that many unchristian ideas of God grow out of the remarks and conduct of thoughtless adults and older children," said Mrs. Abbott, after she had thanked Mrs. Brown. "We shall have to help correct these also. Some of these ideas develop because the children are really too young to understand what is said. Others grow out of wrong instruction by adults who do not understand the Christian ideas of God or who have not yet accepted personally Jesus' faith in God."

Learning Each Child's Ideas of God. "There are wide differences in ideas of God among Primary children," said Miss Green. "A Primary teacher cannot teach children about God until she finds out how far each child has grown in his understanding of and fellowship with God. Then she can help him to grow from that point into more developed Christian ideas and feelings."

"Some third-grade children certainly are far behind other children in the first grade," said Mrs. Abbott.

"This has been so helpful," said Miss Morgan. "But I am often puzzled about what to teach about Jesus as well as about ideas of God."

"Suppose we study that objective next?" said Mrs. Abbott. "Mrs. Allen, will you lead us?"

The Primary Child and Jesus

Mrs. Allen had the following study ready at the next meeting:

Jesus Makes God Real. "A teacher cannot develop Christian ideas of God without studying the children's attitude toward and their ideas of Jesus, for Jesus makes God real through his life and words. The children are spurred on to be God's children, to work for God's kingdom by the desire to be like Jesus and to be his friends. I try to teach my class that Jesus knew God better than anyone who ever lived. Often in meeting some class problem I help the children to decide it according to what Jesus taught. This putting teachings of Jesus into practice is a valuable method in teaching the Christian attitude toward Jesus."

Learning About Jesus' Life. "My children also like to hear well-told stories of Jesus' love and tenderness, of his interest in children, of his response to human need, and of his love of nature."

Beginnings of Evangelism. "When the child's love for and interest in Jesus are fostered, he accepts him as friend and helper, and then, when he grows older, as a personal Saviour. This seems to me to be the beginning of a vital evangelism."

Jesus the Children's Example. "A quotation from this book, which I found in the library, has helped me too: 'Just as the Jewish children who heard him say,

"Let them come to me, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as they are," must have clung to him and nestled in his arms, so the children of to-day, imaginatively realizing him, make him their actual leader, their helper, who saves them from their own unsocial impulses.'[2] The children should feel that they are doing as God would have them do when they seek to be like Jesus. No one can try to become like another without coming very close to the exemplar. It seems to me that theological teachings regarding Jesus, such, for example, as the Trinity, should not be taught directly to Primary children. The child who has been led to live in a fellowship dominated by Jesus' personality is far better able to understand theological teachings later than one who has had no such experiences, but has had merely fact teachings about Jesus."

Confusing God and Jesus. "I find that my children are troubled because they so easily confuse God and Jesus. So I was glad to read recently that many Primary workers think it wise to have Primary children pray to God only. When a child has already his ideas of God and of Jesus confused, I have found there is no need for lengthy explanations. A simple statement that God and Jesus are not the same, that Jesus is God's Son, and that he was sent by God to teach us how to love him and each other, is all that is necessary."

Connecting Christmas With Man Jesus. "I am glad that in our department the Christmas stories are given meaning by being connected with the man Jesus. Many children would think of the baby and the man Jesus as two persons, if we were not careful. I liked the worship services last December, when Christmas was

[2] G. A. Coe, *A Social Theory of Religious Education.* Used by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers.

approached as the coming of Jesus, the Friend and Helper, whom the children already knew and admired."

The Bible for Primaries

"I have another problem," said Miss Green. "A mother brought it to my attention: 'What parts of the Bible are most helpful to Primary children and how should they be taught?'"

"How our meetings are making us think!" said Mrs. Abbott. "Shall I talk about the place of the Bible with Primary children?"

Learning What the Bible Is. Next time Mrs. Abbott began: "The Primary child needs to know that the Bible is the inspired source book for church-school teaching."

Her teachers looked surprised.

"I knew that you would think 'Why tell us that?'" laughed Mrs. Abbott. "Many Primary children have no way of knowing, however, that many of their stories and verses are found in the Bible. Teachers often take it for granted that the Primary children have a knowledge of what the Bible stands for that they do not have. Have you noticed that I often say the Bible tells about God and Jesus, and that it tells what Jesus taught about God also?"

"That reminds me of one of the second-grade children," said Mrs. Branch. 'What is the black book over there?' he asked on the Sunday he enrolled in our department. 'Is it the Bible?'

"'Yes,' I answered.

"'We are learning the one hundred and twenty-first psalm from that in day school,' said he.

"I was surprised, as I knew he had been attending church school regularly in another city.

"'You have learned more than the one hundred and

twenty-first psalm from the Bible; all the stories about Jesus, and what the Sunday-school teacher and your mother tell you about God they find in the Bible.'

"'I never knew that before,' was the answer."

"Sometimes in teaching Primary children we seem to have taken too much for granted, indeed!" said Mrs. Allen.

Importance of New Testament Materials. "Not all parts of the Bible are of equal value for children," continued Mrs. Abbott. "So, a few simple rules for selecting materials will be helpful. First, the simpler New Testament stories, especially those which tell of Jesus and what he taught of God, are of especial importance. Of course not all stories of Jesus nor all the teachings of Jesus can be understood by Primary children.

"But some of his teachings, like 'Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish,'[3] or his statement, 'Blessed are the peacemakers,'[4] are not found in story form," asked Mrs. Allen, "yet they seem fundamental Christian principles. How are we going to teach them to Primary children?"

"We can teach them these passages," answered Mrs. Abbott, "but I have always felt that a mastery of words has little meaning unless actual practice of them is provided and a feeling about them is aroused. We may show how they apply to the child's own life or in the experiences of others. One method of doing this is to help the children to practice the truth back of the Bible verses, connecting the first of the verses which you quoted with their efforts for the good of others, and the second with their attempts to live peacefully.

[3] Matthew 18. 4.
[4] Matthew 5. 9.

"Another way is to use good modern stories which show how these principles work in life to-day. Perhaps a series of stories may be used showing the different ways in which the children may live each principle."

"Then you really teach the Bible through the use of modern life stories if you select the stories wisely. I am glad to know that," said Mrs. Allen.

The Old Testament For Primaries. "The Old Testament is harder to teach," said Miss Green. "Give us some rules to use in selecting materials from it."

"It seems wise to use those parts which are most in keeping with the teachings of Jesus. Some incidents in the Old Testament seem valuable because they show the same spirit of love and goodness which the Gospels portray. Some stories, like that of David sparing the life of Saul, Joseph repaying evil with good, and Abraham giving Lot first choice, are valuable for Primary children because they are in keeping with Jesus' teachings."

"I found a statement in a book which says just what you have said," remarked Miss Jones, "and I made a copy of it and have it with me."

"Do read it," said Mrs. Abbott.

"This is it," said Miss Jones: "'*We may approach the Old Testament through the New.* We may accept Our Lord's revelation of the Nature of God and Goodness, and read the Old Testament in the light of this revelation, viewing the happenings and sayings we find in it from what we feel to be the Christian point of view, and testing them by the standard of Jesus Himself.'"[5]

Interest in the Bible as a Book. Then Mrs. Abbott

[5] Hetty Lee, *Present-Day Problems In Religious Teaching.* Used by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

continued: "Because the Primary children are so imitative, a careless use or a neglect of the Bible keeps it an unknown book. We should remember too that the third-grade children have an especial interest in any book due to their rapid mastery of reading. The third-grade teacher who occasionally reads a story from the Bible itself, instead of telling it, is helping to arouse a friendly interest in it." "That is why I give Bibles to the third-grade children on Promotion Day. When the teacher uses a verse like 'I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord,'"[6] said Miss Green, "should not the child know that this is a beautiful thought about God which one of God's friends wrote, and that it has been kept in the Bible?" "I think he should," answered Mrs. Abbott.

Solving Problems of Conduct. "Children should also learn to go to the Bible as a source of help when trying to solve conduct problems. When a child learns to say, 'Do all things without murmurings' (Phil. 2. 14), I like to have him learn also that this verse is one of the records of God's will in the Bible."

Knowledge of Biblical Customs. "Primary children, especially those in the third grade, are interested in biblical customs. This is the same approach that the public school uses in teaching geography in this grade. I have found that a good third-grade activity is one that gives the children more correct ideas of Bible times. One of my third-grade classes made an Oriental house, and after they had enjoyed it, presented it to the beginners. The beginners had just had the story of Jesus and the paralytic, so they were quite pleased."

Greater Care In the Use of the Bible. "It seems to me that teachers have sometimes taught Bible material

[6] Psa. 122. 1.

to Primary children without trying to decide what ideas of God the stories would develop. They have hurried on to other Bible material and the children have had only a smattering, not a thorough knowledge of any of it," said Mrs. Abbott.

"I think we teachers have not always taken the time to connect Bible teaching with the children's actual lives, either," said Miss Green. "Mrs. Abbott has helped me to see that Primary teachers can profitably teach less Bible material and teach that more thoroughly, and practice with the children its applications in modern life. They can learn to center their teachings on the teachings of Jesus. I believe the Bible will have more influence with the child to-day if they do."

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Questions

1. What ideas of God does the course of study which you are using seek to teach? Through the use of what activities and materials does it seek to accomplish this aim?

2. What ideas of and attitudes toward Jesus is a child supposed to learn as a result of the plans given in your course of study?

3. How is the Bible used?

What Would You Do?

"My mother told me Santa Claus was true and I've found out that he isn't. Is Jesus just fooling too?" a child asked his teacher. Why is the problem of the reality of Santa Claus a Primary problem? What is the child's attitude toward the adult who is teaching him about Jesus in this incident? Why would a child associate Jesus and Santa Claus in his thinking? Organize a Christmas teaching unit to help a first grade make the helpful transition from a literal belief in Santa Claus to a practice of the spirit of Christmas and to safeguard the child's belief in the reality of Jesus. What activities would be suitable? What songs, stories, pictures, poems would be helpful? How would you approach the entire problem?

A six-year-old child asked God to keep it from raining. It rained and the child was seen shaking his fists at God. Does this child have a Christian idea of God? Can you trace to any commonly used teachings his idea of God? How could you help a child to overcome this concept of God? What limitation of a child's thinking is evident in this incident?

A teacher was asked what questions about God her children asked; she said, "None; do children so young ask such questions?" How do you account for her lack of knowledge?

CHAPTER II

WHAT SHOULD PRIMARY CHILDREN LEARN?

Objectives in Religious Education

Introductory Study

1. List the tasks of your children which represent their responsibility for the work of the Primary Department; of the church.

2. Make a list of the opportunities planned in your Primary course to help a child find a place in the work and fellowship of his church.

3. What are the aims of the missionary units in your Primary course of study? How many additional units have secondary missionary aims? What relation is there between missionary education and a child's idea of God?

4. List some important conduct problems of the Primary children whom you know best.

Getting Started

At the next teachers' meeting Miss Green had a copy of a well-known monthly magazine.

"I read such an interesting article in this issue," she told Mrs. Allen, who was seated next to her on the davenport. "It discussed the value of the church to the individual and to society."

"I must read it," replied Mrs. Allen. "My class is starting a group of lessons next Sunday on helping and worshiping at church. Mrs. Abbott, can we not discuss the Primary child's place in the church next?"

"Certainly," said Mrs. Abbott; "that is another topic to be discussed under Miss Green's question, 'What should we teach to help Primary children grow religiously?' We have helped each other to think of ideas of God and of Jesus and the helpful use of the Bible with Primaries. The very next topic under objectives may well be 'What should be the Primary child's relation to the church?'"

The Primary Child and the Church

A Place in a Fellowship. "If a child asked you what a church is, how would you answer?" inquired Miss Morgan.

"I told my own children," answered Mrs. Allen, "that a church is a group of people who try together to do God's work; that they often have a beautiful place in which to work, as that reminds them of God. I said that as the people worked for God they knew that he was their friend, so they stopped every now and then to worship him."

"In other words, a church is a big family trying to follow Jesus. It acknowledges God as Leader and Father," said Miss Morgan, thoughtfully. "I like that answer, and I want the children to think that they have a genuine part in this fellowship and in its work. Is that wise?"

"Indeed, yes," Mrs. Brown said. "A Primary child is conscious of social groups other than the home because of his new school life. I want my own children to feel that they belong to a large Christian group as well as a small Christian family."

"Surely we cannot wait until a child grows up to help him find his place in the church family," said Mrs. Abbott. "Our Primary Department can be one

big family loving and serving God, but I do not want the children's opportunities for fellowship to stop there."

Fellowship with Entire Church Membership. "Not only should Primary children have chances to work and worship with children of their own age, but they should work in friendly ways with the little children, the older boys and girls and the adults. A Primary Department should have its own room, because then the children may be placed in surroundings just suited to their religious development. On the other hand, I never consider that Primary workers can provide all of the necessary Christian fellowship. Our doors swing outward so we can constantly broaden the children's friendly interests."

"Why not encourage the children as a phase of our regular plans to take the part which they can best accomplish in certain plans in which the church and other departments of the church school are interested also?" asked Mrs. Brown. "This should not be just something added on. We have missionary activities and plans of caring for the church which fit right in with this idea. I see no reason for the church, or even the separate departments, working as individual units when they can work together."

"The children will get practice in co-operating in Christian ways," said Miss Green, "and the plan fits in well with the suggested activities in some of the units in our courses of study."

"Do you know what I believe?" asked Mrs. Abbott. "More and more our future curriculum will give a central place to important Christian plans in which the entire church fellowship may engage. Each group will receive as its special task that part which it can best

accomplish and which will help it to learn what it needs most to know."

"The Primary child's interest in the grownup gives meaning to any plan upon which he sees adults spend time and effort," commented Miss Morgan.

Learning to Belong. "When the work of a church is so arranged that the children have an important part in all the purposes to which they can make any contribution, then their relation to the church will be that of initiates and they will have a real sense of 'belonging,'" added Mrs. Allen. "I long for that day to come!"

"Our children are never led to feel that the church sanctuary is the real church and that the church school building is not," said Mrs. Abbott. "They are taught to think that the church is a fellowship of people who use and enjoy the entire building."

The Teaching Value of the Beauty of the Church. "As one result of my next teaching unit, I hope my class gains a real appreciation of the beauty of our church building," said Mrs. Allen.

"That is all right in this church," declared Miss Morgan; "but suppose you taught in an ugly church?"

"If a church has no beauty, the congregation would do well to provide some beauty spot even though it be only a cluster of shrubs or some flower plots," replied Mrs. Allen. "I once knew some church workers in a mill village. There was nothing beautiful in their church building, as it was the typical red brick structure of the previous generation. But those workers! The church was kept spotlessly clean. Flower beds were arranged along one side and a riot of color peeped in at every classroom window, making the church the loveliest place in that entire community. Now, our

church is pure thirteenth-century Gothic. Our task is to interpret its beauty worshipfully to the children. I am planning to have my group listen for the church chimes, and pause in the court one Sunday and sing 'Enter Into His Gates With Thanksgiving.'[1] Then another Sunday I want to take them into the sanctuary, sit in the pews and look at the beautiful carved reredos and the delicate fretwork above the organ. Last year, a little sense of wonder came into the children's faces as they looked at the lamp which burns before the altar, and I told of Samuel and Eli and explained the details. I think they understood that it was their church and that its beauty was one of their heritages. 'I love the high arches. Look how they go up so far,' said Norman, quietly, as the class left the sanctuary. I shall never forget that experience."

"I like your plan," said Mrs. Abbott. "Sometimes a church may be ugly yet possess beautiful stained-glass windows. They offer a real opportunity to the leader."

"Processionals and recessionals with their movement and robes all appeal to the child's love of activity and of the dramatic," suggested Mrs. Brown. "When a communion practices certain ritual observances such as infant dedication and the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, should not the children be helped to understand the meaning back of these observances? Unless they do, they are likely to try to work out interpretations of them. I learned that from my own child. George went to church with me one Sunday when he was seven, and on the way home he said in a shocked tone, 'I didn't think grown people *ate* in church, mother!'"

"I have even known these interpretations, because of

[1] *Carols*, Leyda Publishing Company.

the child's immaturity, to have positively pagan elements," added Mrs. Abbott.

The Child's Responsibility for the Church. "Along with their appreciation of the church's beauty, I hope my children will learn to do their part at church," Mrs. Allen stated. "Unless they do, they will not be real members."

"What habits of helping do you hope to have them acquire, Mrs. Allen?" asked Miss Green. "You know my class has decided to work on the same unit and I would like to have your ideas."

"They may acquire habits of caring for the church building and for the church membership," was the reply. "One plan I expect to suggest will help them welcome the little new children into the department and so practice church fellowship. Another gives them practice in caring for their own room and being responsible for its appearance. Still another teaches each child to do his part of the work of the department and class. Then when there are good times, like parties in the department, I want the children to enjoy them of course. But they should also learn that good times must be provided as well as enjoyed."

"Children's parties are of greater value if they are regarded as a regular part of the department or class teaching and try to fix habits of responsibility for the happiness of the church family," declared Mrs. Abbott. "The children must plan the games, help to provide the refreshments, and learn to 'be kind to one another' if the party is of real teaching value."

"In other words," Miss Morgan said, "the church, like the home, that does everything for its children, does not provide sufficient opportunity for growth. The children get no chance to become responsible."

"Before we leave this subject," Mrs. Allen said, "I should like to hear Miss Green's ideas on helping children to do their part at church."

"My ideas are like yours," replied Miss Green. "In addition I want the children to learn that a Christian church does not spend all of its time working for itself. The children will be helped to learn this, first, by working for other groups within the church, the nursery, the Beginners and even the older groups. That will begin to broaden their chances for helpfulness. Then I want my class to share in the church's plans for the relief of the needy and the sick. Finally, I hope to have them participate in the missionary work of the church."

"Do you realize that Miss Green has suggested our next topic—'The Primary Child and Missionary Education'?" asked Mrs. Abbott.

"I have been waiting eagerly all along for us to reach the discussion of aims in missionary education," remarked Mrs. Brown. "That is one of my absorbing interests."

"Then," said Mrs. Abbott with a twinkle in her eye, "we shall count upon you to start our meeting next time."

The Primary Child Helping to Build a World-Wide Christian Society

Care and Interest in Others, the Basis for Missionary Education. At the next teachers' meeting Mrs. Brown began:

"All the missionary education of Primary children cannot be provided for in separate units of teaching labeled 'Missionary.' It is said that any Christian education, including missionary education, is based upon the development of two powerful innate human drives—

first, the parental instinct which develops into care for others and, second, interest in people. Many class sessions not definitely missionary will have some missionary emphasis. I think of the missionary education of children as helping them to be like Jesus and to share their knowledge of him, so that there may be a world-wide Christian fellowship. When we accept this definition of missionary education, we see that it may and should be interwoven with most of the work of the Primary Department.

"It seems to me too that children do not make so close a distinction between tender care for persons and tender care for animals as we grown-ups do. The same innate capacity is spiritualized by activity which gives practice in caring for both. Many of the first teachings of missions will go back to simple home or class activities which give a child opportunities to show tender care to animals as well as persons. A young child does not understand the difference between kindness to people at home and those abroad. For this reason to divide missionary education into 'Home' and 'Foreign' is an artificial separation for Primaries."

"May I interrupt?" asked Miss Morgan. "Do you mean that in the missionary education of children we start with very simple opportunities to be kind to both persons and animals and gradually build on that basis until a child is living and sharing as a Christian with all races and peoples?"

"Exactly," said Mrs. Brown.

"Then there can be no religious education that has not some missionary character and is not a natural part of a child's growing religious experience," commented Mrs. Allen.

"Yes," said Mrs. Abbott, "and our task again is to

help the children's practice of neighborliness and growth in Christian attitudes to keep pace with their social opportunities and interests."

"We had better see what are the special Primary problems in missionary education then," suggested Miss Jones.

"That is the next point I had prepared," answered Mrs. Brown.

Special Primary Missionary Problems. "The Primary child's knowledge of other peoples is growing rapidly. This is due chiefly to his contacts with children at public school. Some of his contacts also grow out of his greater freedom to get about the community. Here he may meet persons like fruit venders and foreigners working in labor gangs. So he has increased understanding of different peoples. His missionary education should surely keep pace with these contacts or many prejudices may develop."

Interest in Customs. "A Primary child is interested in the ways in which other peoples live. His life at public school quickens this interest. So one of the natural approaches to an understanding of other peoples is through an appreciation of their customs, clothing, festivals, songs, games, and stories. You remember the World's Fair my class made?"

The others nodded.

"I heard remarks indicating respect for the gifts of other peoples all the time my class was working on it."

"I noticed that in my class too," commented Miss Jones. "It helped the children to understand the point of view of others."

Avoiding a Sense of Superiority. "One answer my children make when we talk about the reason for missionary activities seems unfortunate," said Miss Mor-

gan. "How am I going to help them to stop saying 'The poor little children' in a superior tone?"

"The plans just suggested should help," answered Mrs. Abbott, "for they show how interesting other peoples are. Then I had a Primary teacher once who was talking about some Chinese plans. Her children spoke several times in a most condescending manner about the 'poor little children in China.' The teacher immediately began to tell about the enormous wealth of certain Chinese families, of their gorgeous homes, and of the great learning of the country. She was trying to overcome the sense of superiority based upon the idea that all Chinese were poverty-stricken coolies."

"Do you not think it is well to arrange for an interchange of gifts in order to avoid a condescending superiority rather than to have the giving always one-sided?" asked Miss Jones.

"Indeed I do," replied Mrs. Allen. "The projects of the Committee on World Friendship among Children provide for just such a splendid interchange."

"Sometimes a letter with just a kodak picture of the group receiving the material, is a sufficient response to destroy any sense of condescension," added Mrs. Abbott. "As Professor Hartshorne says, in *Childhood and Character,* the giving must be on the basis of sharing the Father's bounty."

Starting with Personal Contacts. "Have you noticed how often our missionary plans grow out of some personal contact with persons who arouse the children's interest in the problems of a social or racial group?" asked Mrs. Brown. "The Chinese student who visited our church school stimulated a genuine interest in Chinese children and their problems."

"Then there was the letter my class received from my

missionary friend in Japan. It aroused genuine interest in the Japanese," suggested Mrs. Allen.

"Many of these human interests can be introduced through the teacher's own contacts and the contacts of the children," added Mrs. Abbott.

"Some of the problems of public-school life will help to determine the missionary interests of the children," continued Mrs. Brown. "Then actual friendly contacts with other groups help. Some of these may be set up through parties and play groups,[2] others through efforts that the children may make for the comfort of foreign children at public school or in the church school.

"In establishing friendly contacts both groups should be safeguarded from any sense of condescension or of inferiority or the total learnings will not be helpful. Especially is this true when a privileged group comes in contact with an under-privileged one. When unfortunate social conditions become quite apparent to the children, I have found that the teacher needs to show some of the underlying causes."

"She can protect the children from the idea that some Americans have that any person may become successful if he tries hard enough," Miss Jones suggested; "that poverty and ignorance are the fault of the persons who are poor or ignorant. Such an attitude is contrary to the Christian attitude toward persons, since it develops contempt for those who have not been successful."

"Neither is it a true estimate of effort," added Mrs. Abbott. "We cannot begin too early to help the children to be just to all classes and races."

Correcting Wrong Ideas Growing Out of Thoughtless Statements. "The Primary teacher not only has the task of developing friendly attitudes toward other

[2] An example is given on page 88.

classes and races," continued Mrs. Brown, "she also tries to correct misunderstandings regarding other groups which her children already are forming. Some of these misconceptions often grow out of the foolish statements of adults. Marvin's mother reported just such an incident: One evening his father made the statement: 'Japan is just waiting to jump on us. We had better be ready for her.' The statement was a hasty and ill-considered one of course. The father was puzzled when he was about to contribute to the Japanese relief fund, months afterward, and found that his eight-year-old Marvin disapproved any friendliness toward the Japanese. He did not realize that he himself was responsible for the boy's attitude until he questioned him."

"Why do adults make such statements?" asked Miss Green. "They do not really believe them."

"They are using a sort of safety valve for expressing their response to certain magazine or newspaper articles, books or statements heard in a conversation. In their better moments many of them would change their own statements," replied Mrs. Abbott. "I am afraid that we are all prone to do it. Unfortunately, a child has not the ability to distinguish between the thoughtless and the thoughtful speeches of adults."

Teachings From Moving Pictures. "Sometimes these ideas grow out of emotional and overdrawn moving pictures which Primary children are allowed to attend. A Primary child once said in our assembly when some Mexican pictures were shown: 'Oh, Mexicans are bad. They shoot with guns.' I finally traced his statement back to a moving picture which the boy had seen."

Unusual Customs of Other Peoples. "Children also form some of their prejudices toward other races or

groups from exactly the same sources from which we adults obtain them—differences in appearance, clothing, or language," suggested Miss Jones. "The harmless but unusual customs of another people impress many children and also many grown persons as being quite improper. Older Primary children can be helped to overcome prejudices growing out of differences in language by having the teacher make a game of learning the different ways of saying the same thing in different countries."

Generalizing From a Scanty Knowledge. "Do not children as well as grown persons become prejudiced against other races because of some undesirable persons belonging to the race?" asked Miss Green. "I knew an Italian fruit vender once who represented his entire race to our neighborhood. The children feared him and many of the grown-ups regarded him with disapproval. Yet I have known quite a number of Americans who were just as quarrelsome and dirty as was he. The Primary teacher remembers that children and adults are too prone to generalize concerning other racial and social groups from a scanty knowledge."

"Sometimes a child's personal contacts with a member of another race may be used to help him to correct a false idea about the race," Miss Branch said. "Once a boy in my class confided that he hated 'niggers,' 'that they were mean and dirty and that they would hurt you.'

"'All Negroes?' I asked. 'Do you think Aunt Kate (his beloved cook) would hurt you, or Jack (the house boy)?'

"'Of course not,' he said; 'they are my friends.'

"'Well,' I asked, 'do you think all Negroes are mean and will hurt you?' The child looked at me in aston-

ishment. It was just impossible, after he had been protected by the love and care of these two persons, for him to despise their race."

"A child's contempt or fear of a race may even grow out of what he has heard at church school," Mrs. Abbott added, thoughtfully watching the faces of her teachers. "Teachers have told stories which, in order to make a strong missionary appeal, speak of disgusting or barbaric practices. Once I made the mistake, in order to arouse interest in a Chinese baby clinic, of telling a story in which the Chinese mother, seeking earnestly to save her little sick baby, treated him rather cruelly. In the midst of my story I realized that I was developing an unfriendly attitude toward the very Chinese in whom I had hoped to develop friendly interest. The story was quickly changed in the telling, you may be sure."

"Why, Mrs. Abbott, that is a new idea! What kind of missionary stories do you mean?" was the response. "Stories which dwell on the religious customs of other peoples, on their worshiping idols, should be carefully avoided," Mrs. Abbott replied. "Songs as well as stories need to be questioned as to the attitude and practice toward other peoples which they encourage. Fortunately, we have outgrown any song that speaks of 'heathen nations'! All missionary pictures should be carefully studied. Be careful in describing the food of other peoples to children. Many a child has felt disgust for the Chinese, for example, because he was told that they ate ancient eggs. Perhaps the teacher who gave him this information did not explain that a process of preservation had been used. A teacher should think of some of our own foods before she emphasizes the queer food habits of other nations."

"I think one of the needs of our own Primary children is for friendly contacts with different groups because the children never come in contact with children of any other class or racial group than their own," said Mrs. Branch. "We are leaving them with too narrow social interests. This is often true of children from the so-called privileged homes."

"Can a teacher help children to have friendly contacts with other classes or races without making a contribution to the child's ideas of God?" asked Miss Green. "Through missionary education will not the children understand more clearly that God is the Father of other children and that he cares equally for all his children?"

"Why, yes, that is true," said Mrs. Allen. "These friendly contacts really give practice in living as members of God's world family."

"We teachers and parents will have to get rid of our own social prejudices and unchristian ideas if we are really going to teach world friendliness. Remember we teach most by what we live!" Mrs. Branch reminded the others. "We better think through exactly how much of the universal Fatherhood of God we are willing to accept. Our actual acceptance is decided by how much we are willing to practice!" "Religion does express itself in ways of living," Mrs. Abbott added, "and that brings us to another objective—How can we help Primary children to grow in Christian control of conduct?"

Growth in the Christian Control of Conduct

The Child a Doer. Mrs. Abbott opened the next meeting with the statement, "The Primary child is first of all a doer. The mastery of control of conduct ac-

cording to Christian values has a large place in his religious training. He is in a period of change from little childhood to older boy and girl life. This makes him conscious of the differences in the standards of the various homes represented in his school or church-school groups. Such a conflict of standards is bound to lead to new standards and new ideas of right and wrong. During such a period of development the child's growth in Christian conduct control is of especial importance."

How Standards of Conduct Arise. "Have you ever thought how ideas of right and wrong are gained?"

"I have thought," replied Mrs. Brown, "that children get ideas of right and wrong by imitation. Their desire to fit into the adult life leads them to accept, in most cases, the moral standards of the group, especially of the family."

"Children get their ideas of right and wrong conduct through what we approve and what we disapprove," added Mrs. Allen. "I do not think they can discriminate in the approval either. Many things which are merely annoying to us are classed by children as wrong."

"Children also get their ideas of right and wrong through what is known as the trial-and-error method," added Mrs. Abbott. "What they can do without getting into trouble with some grown person is what they are likely to consider right. Any conduct that they try out and about which there is trouble is wrong."

"That would give them very confused standards if grown persons were unwise," commented Miss Morgan.

"Indeed it would," said Mrs. Abbott. "Have you not known children who evidently thought such ways of behaving as whining and tale-bearing were acceptable

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because they 'worked,' and have you not known children to be confused because parents did not stick to any settled ideas of right and wrong for children, sometimes laughing at and again punishing for the same deed?"

"Yes, and now I see how important these conduct problems are religiously."

"We had better aim to meet some of them," Miss Morgan replied. "I will suggest one—truth-telling. You know what a struggle I am having with Elizabeth. She seems to make very slow progress in learning to report accurately on what has really happened."

Truth-Telling. "The Primary child is at the age when he can begin to form habits of accurate reporting," replied Mrs. Abbott. "The ability to judge differences between real and unreal is steadily growing. I know that is why you are concerned about Elizabeth."

"I am trying to help her to realize the value of truth-telling and the social necessity for it. I have stressed often that persons must depend on each other to tell the truth in order that they may live happily together."

"At the same time a child's desire for the delightful fanciful stories should be satisfied, shouldn't it?" suggested Miss Jones. "You can give a child the needed training in distinguishing between fanciful and real stories by using both."

"Unless parents and teachers are truthful in all their dealings with the children, the children will have to seek help from other persons in mastering habits of truth-telling," added Miss Green. "I have had a real problem in my class because of the so-called 'social' lies. Some of the children are confused about truth-telling. They think it is to be practiced when it is convenient, and I am afraid they have this idea because they have seen grown-ups do the same thing."

"Like saying you are not at home when a book agent comes," added Mrs. Allen. "The child like Elizabeth who is having difficulty in forming habits of truth-telling may be encouraged to feel that God is a helper too, the One who gives moral strength."[3]

"What about children who are purposely telling an untruth to get attention?" asked Miss Jones.

"The child who is willfully seeking to win adult approval through an untruth should feel disapproval. He should feel the sorrow of the person whose favor he is seeking," replied Mrs. Abbott. "Many problems of truth-telling are connected with problems of property rights. Have you ever noticed that?"

"I had a case like that Sunday," replied Mrs. Allen. "Joanna brought a ball to church school and while we were working at our class table it dropped on the floor. Charles picked it up and would not return it. He said he found it and so it was his. I asked him how he thought the ball happened to be on the floor. At first he squirmed and said he did not know. Edward suggested that some child must have dropped it and Charles finally agreed with him. Then I asked what people did who had found something that they were almost sure belonged to someone else. Again Charles did not know. Jean said we asked if any one had lost it.

" 'But I want this ball,' said Charles.

"I said: 'A ball is a good thing to have. If you really want it, you must know how the child who lost the ball feels.'

"Charles waited a moment. I could see he was really struggling.

[3] An example of such a teaching situation is given in Chapter X, page 205.

" 'Pretty bad I'd feel,' he said, and gave the ball to Joanna."

Property Rights. "A little child has handled practically no money and has been under such close supervision and been so much a part of a family life that he has had little chance to understand the difference between 'mine' and 'thine.' The Primary child has greater freedom and larger social contacts, so respect for property rights may raise a number of problems for him. The social significance of property rights may be stressed and a child be helped to see how unhappy the abuse or loss of another's property makes him just as Charles did."

"I am glad you let him make his own decision," commented Miss Morgan.

"I have found out that the best way of teaching property rights is to give a child property and then help him to appreciate our respect for it," Mrs. Branch said. "That worked with my own children."

"When Joe was so destructive of my sister's garden and the neighbor's roses, we helped him to feel that he was God's helper caring for the out-of-door world," added Miss Jones.

"The same methods may be used in teaching children proper care for property which is common to many persons, such as parks and picnic grounds. Too little has been done in both the public school and the church school to give children practice in respecting property," said Miss Green. "We have never realized that helping to solve these conduct problems is a part of our task as religious teachers. Many public schools and church schools do not even allow children to bring any material of value with them."

"That is true," said Miss Jones, "though I had not

realized it. The materials which they use are materials which are furnished to them. I have heard that some public school and church-school workers are suggesting to the children that they bring certain belongings. Then the child is helped to share them with other children or to use those that are shared in proper ways."

"Much can be done in teaching respect for common property if the teachers are careful to see that the property of the church is used in ways for the good of all," Mrs. Abbott said. "The carelessness and lack of respect for property which are shown in some churches can be a great religious hindrance to children. I once saw a Primary superintendent tear up a smock belonging to a member of the Woman's Auxiliary who had left it in the church for future use. Her excuse was that she wanted it to make something, and she said that 'anything left around here can be used.' Some Primary children were present and I was really grieved."

Obedience. "Let's think about obedience next," suggested Miss Morgan. "That is, if you still think children should learn to obey!"

"Indeed I do," laughed Mrs. Abbott. "A disorderly life is a sad hindrance to either child or adult. Who does not have to obey? The Primary child needs help in facing his problems of prompt and reasonable obedience. If he understands that obedience is one way of working with other people, he will have a much more cheerful attitude to obeying. One of you mothers tell us what some of the home problems in obedience are."

"Certain problems of home obedience grow out of the child's greater freedom, for example, coming home promptly from school," answered Mrs. Allen. "You can easily think of some of the others: running errands,

waiting on themselves, keeping themselves and their rooms clean. It is so hard to take time from play to do these things."

"Other problems of obedience grow out of contact with authority outside of the home," Mrs. Abbott continued. "The child needs help to understand the necessity for rules at school and to understand the authority which he meets there. Often second- and third-grade children misunderstand public-school teachers and 'the big man who owns the school,' the principal, and attitudes which hinder a successful school life are the result. The church school has an especial task to perform in interpreting this authority constructively. A healthy attitude to law is founded in just such teachings."

"Other habits of obedience arise in church school," said Miss Morgan. "I often think of that in connection with discipline. I want to maintain loving relations with my class. On the other hand, I can teach both irreverence for the church and upset the child's ideas of orderliness if I do not help the children to grow in reasonable and helpful ways of behaving while at church."

"Have you ever thought that this makes a natural approach to the teachings of the laws of life?" asked Miss Jones. "Third-grade children can begin to understand something of God's laws. It helps the child to feel that the teacher recognizes and obeys God's laws just as truly as he is expected to do."

"Temperance teachings and self-control are often based on obedience to home teachings both at home and when away from home," added Mrs. Abbott. "The children remember to eat at school the foods which their parents have taught them to eat at home. They learn

that by obeying health rules they are working with God for their own welfare. This is the first lesson against self-injury through the use of intoxicants or cigarette smoking."

"Sometimes, of course, the teaching has to be much more direct, as in the case of cigarette smoking by third-grade children," said Miss Jones. "I have to meet that problem sometimes. I always put the reason for refraining from such a practice upon the basis of co-operating with God."

Peaceful Living and Consideration for Others. "There are many Primary conduct problems which concern peaceful living with other children," Mrs. Abbott said. "Fair play, taking turns, sharing, being willing to accept suggestions from others courteously, showing care for others, and many other ways of behaving offer opportunities through which a child may practice a Christian spirit toward his fellows. Of course the one real way to teach such conduct control is through practice. To practice the teacher adds from time to time instructions and thus interprets it in terms of the Christian point of view."

"I can see now why a child really learns as he lives," said Miss Jones. "I did not quite understand what Mrs. Brown meant at first."

A Summary of Objectives

"Have we found an answer to your question, Miss Green?" asked Mrs. Abbott—"What shall we teach in order that children may grow religiously?"

Miss Green was silent a moment, "Yes," she said, slowly. "We try to teach certain Christian ideas of God, of Jesus, and to use the Bible in intelligent ways. We must help the children to take their place in the

church and in the world-wide Christian society, and we lead them to solve the problems of daily living, such as truth-telling, obedience, and so on, by Christian values. My aims are much clearer, but I feel that I have just begun to study them."

"That is how we all feel," was the consensus of opinion.

There was a silence, and then Mrs. Abbott led in a prayer asking for guidance in the great task of teaching Primary children.

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Questions

1. Find a story or a conversation in your course of study which connects God and doing his will with right conduct.

2. Choose five stories and three songs which you consider good missionary materials. Tell what principles you followed in selecting them.

3. Write down the most important objectives for the religious education of Primaries. Now list the most important steps under each heading. How are your aims, like those discussed in Chapters I and II? How do they differ? What objectives not included here do you

include? Which ones do you omit? Why? Have you studied the objectives of the Primary course you are using? Check them by the discussion in Chapters I and II and by the aims you have written for yourself and see how they are alike and how they differ.

What Would You Do?

(Work on at least one problem)

Some second-grade children were making presents for the Beginners. The gifts were so attractive that they wanted to keep them.

"Why can't we? We made them," one child said.

"You may, if you wish," the teacher answered. "But let's think first why we made the presents."

Their plans were reviewed; they sang "Friends."

"I know now," one child said. "We will give these, and then if we work fast and are not silly, maybe we will have time to make one for ourselves."

The group accepted this decision as its own and carried it out.

Why did the teacher let the children decide? Why did they review their plans? Why did they sing "Friends"? Would the children really have given if they had not thought this problem through? Why not? What else would you have done? What was the teacher's purpose?

"Last Sunday I went to church and everybody had some little pieces of bread to eat and a little cup with pink stuff to drink, and they didn't give me any," reported a seven-year-old. How would you have answered her? What could you do? What materials, pictures, stories, and so on, could you use?

A church was paying for its new building. "We

can't expect any help from the little Primary children," the chairman of the building committee said.

"Indeed, I think you can," said the Primary superintendent. "Please don't leave us out."

Why did she make such a request? Organize the materials and methods to use in a teaching unit, giving children a chance to work and worship at church. Why include worship in the aim?

CHAPTER III

HOW CHILDREN LEARN

Introductory Study

1. A class in methods once defined teaching as "imparting knowledge." If you accept the definition, "imparting knowledge," when would you say that knowledge has been successfully imparted? If you do not accept this definition, write your own.

2. When can we say that a child has learned any lesson we have tried to teach him?

Some of the Primary Teacher's Problems

"Well," began Miss Jones at the next teachers' meeting, "we have at least made a beginning in understanding what our objectives should be. It seems to me though that a teacher faces other problems just as important."

"Indeed she does," replied Miss Morgan. "I may know what to teach, but if I have no idea of how to teach, I will not be successful."

"I think the teacher's whole point of view makes a good deal of difference too," said Mrs. Brown.

"I do not understand you," Miss Jones replied. "What do you mean by point of view?"

Points of View

"Well, every teacher has a point of view," replied Mrs. Brown, "whether or not she can state it in so many words. I often have heard statements like 'This is a good course,' or 'I do not like this book or these lessons.'"

"We make that very statement," Mrs. Allen commented.

"Your opinions of material are based on some idea of what teaching is or should be, are they not?" asked Mrs. Brown.

"It is wise to think through a point of view too," said Mrs. Abbott, "to see if it really includes all that one hopes to accomplish by teaching."

Two Important Points of View. "I found a magazine article recently that said two points of view largely control teaching to-day. Most teachers use a combination of them, some conforming more to the first, others to the second."

"What are these two points of view?" asked Miss Morgan. "I should like to check up on my own ideas of teaching."

"The first point of view is that teaching is imparting knowledge," continued Mrs. Abbott. "It has been followed for quite a number of years. The other is that teaching is guiding life. This point of view is rapidly emerging as social conditions, especially in the home, change. The article said that society is making increasing demands upon both the public school and the church-school teacher to give guidance in character development. This is one of the chief reasons for the changing point of view."

"My husband, who is a high-school principal, as you know," said Mrs. Allen, "says that never has character development been discussed so fully at teachers' meetings as at present."

"I think we are more conscious of our responsibility for developing Christians through the church than teachers have ever been," added Miss Green. "I had not realized before that social changes had placed this

heavier responsibility for character growth on school and church. Mrs. Abbott, tell us more about these points of view of teaching."

Imparting Knowledge. "Very well," said Mrs. Abbott. "I received a letter this week from my cousin who has recently taken a Primary class in Junction City. I shall read you a part of it.

" 'I am very much disturbed because I told the story this morning of Isaac refusing to quarrel and drilled on the memory verse, "Be ye kind to one another." I have been teaching the theme "Kindliness" for several weeks. Some of my children got into a fight in front of the church immediately after the class period. Those children knew the Bible verse and the stories perfectly, but the lessons did not have any effect. What shall I do?'

"I think my cousin's letter illustrates the first point of view that teaching is 'imparting knowledge,' giving facts and expecting them somehow to have an influence."

"Did your cousin not make a mistake in thinking that if she taught children to recite verses and know stories about kindness, they would learn to be kind?" asked Miss Green.

"What really happened," replied Mrs. Abbott, "was that the children learned what she taught, namely, verses and stories about kindness. She expected too much, for the children were not likely to learn what she did not teach, kindly ways of thinking, feeling, and acting. They had what is sometimes called a *verbal* or word knowledge of kindliness."

"Then, too, she must give time for practice. The children will rarely learn a lesson in a few Sundays. When a habit is being built, it is a case of here a little, there a little, isn't it?" asked Mrs. Brown.

Guiding Life. "But are church-school teachers in-

terested primarily in a child's mere knowledge of facts about religion?" asked Miss Morgan.

"I am interested, first of all, in my children's growth in Christian character, in the children's learning ways of thinking, feeling, and acting which follow the teachings of Jesus," answered Miss Green.

"I wrote my cousin," continued Mrs. Abbott, "that she would have to give practice in what she aimed to teach. If she wanted the children to learn to be peaceful, they must have chances to practice peaceful ways of living with each other, not just learn words about being peaceful. I told her that a religious lesson learned was a bit of life lived successfully, not something studied out of a book. I also said that stories and Bible verses had a very important place in arousing desires to live as Christians and in showing how Christians live, but that they must be used as tools to help children, not as materials to be handed over."

"I believe there is a helpful quotation in this library book," exclaimed Miss Green. "Shall I read it? 'Knowledge cannot be passed directly from one person to another as money can be put into one's pocket by another person. . . . Learning implies an actual change in the nerve and brain fibers.' "[1]

"Does not this quotation furnish a guide to the point of view that teaching is guiding life?" asked Mrs. Abbott, thoughtfully. "Teaching is stimulating and guiding a child so that desirable changes in those nerve or brain fibers which control his action, feeling, and thought occur. Religious teaching brings about changes that result in more Christian ideas, attitudes, and conduct."

[1] Edwin H. Reeder, *Simplifying Teaching*. Used by permission of Laidlaw Brothers, publishers.

"In other words, your cousin changed the nerve and brain fibers used in mastering a Bible verse and the details of some stories, but not those controlling ways of acting or feeling," commented Mrs. Brown.

"I like that point," said Miss Morgan, "because it places emphasis on what teaching must do—help the one who learns. Too often I have thought of teaching as something I did instead of thinking of what happened to the children when they learned. Thank you, Mrs. Abbott, and you too, Miss Green. From now on I am going to think more of my pupils as learners whom I must help. I see that our group of teachers leans to this second point of view of teaching."

The Laws of Learning

Learning According to Law. "I wonder if there are any laws of learning which will enable us better to help our children to learn?" asked Miss Jones.

Mrs. Abbott smiled. "I shall never forget a young teacher I had before I moved to Mercerville. One morning at the close of the session she came to me. Her face was flushed and she seemed quite fatigued.

"'I am going to resign,' she said. 'I try to teach and sometimes I succeed and things go finely. Then again the children are too bad for words. I never can guess which way things will go.'

"I asked what laws of learning she tried to use in planning for her class period. 'Laws of Learning!' she exclaimed—and I shall never forget the expression on her face—'I don't follow any. I just learn the plan in the teacher's book. I didn't know there were any rules!'

"I tried to tell her that learning meant a change in the nerve connections of a child's brain, and that her

task was to stimulate, guide, and make habitual these changes by following certain laws. I said that some of these laws have already been discovered and some are probably used unconsciously.

"'I can work if I am not in the dark,' the young teacher answered. 'Go slow and tell me about these laws of learning and I'll try again.'"

"Mrs. Abbott, why don't you 'go slow,' and tell us about these laws of learning too?" Mrs. Allen said, smiling.

"I have thought of a plan," said Mrs. Abbott. "Mrs. Allen, do you think your busy husband would come to our next meeting and help us better to understand the laws of learning?"

"I think he would be glad to," replied Mrs. Allen. "He was much interested when I told him about our studies of aims."

The Three Major Laws of Learning

At the next meeting Mr. Allen was present. He began:

"So far as students of the mind know, the three most important laws of learning are the Law of Readiness, the Law of Exercise, and the Law of Effect. Good teachers have always used these laws unconsciously just as the good teacher probably to-day uses other laws yet undiscovered. Probably each one of you could state them from past experience. I hope what I shall say will cause you to recall what you already know about these laws."

The Law of Readiness

Getting Nerve Connections in the Brain "Ready" to Act. "When I speak of the Law of Readiness, I do not

mean that the teacher is ready to teach or that the children have prepared an assignment, though both preparations may help to contribute to readiness. I mean that the proper connection in the brain fiber, the one which controls the desired response, is ready to act. It has been stimulated in some way. Many teachers will recognize this getting readiness as what they once called 'securing attention.' However, we have thought too much in the past about the teacher's activity in getting attention and not enough of what must happen to the child's controlling nerve fibers before he was ready to pay attention."

Purpose and Readiness. "I can give you an example of the relation between a strong purpose and getting this readiness," interrupted Mrs. Abbott, with an apology. "My sister came back from a shopping trip to-day and showed me a piece of silk which she had matched. She was tired but happy. 'I've been to every silk shop in town, but I found what I wanted,' she said. 'I just had my *mind set* on finding that silk.' "

"Exactly," said Mr. Allen. "Here a strong purpose had caused a readiness of the nerve connections, a mind set necessary in carrying out this task."

When There Is Already a Strong Purpose. "Do not the pupils sometimes have a worthy mind set, as you call it, when the class meets on Sunday?" asked Miss Green. "I have often wondered what I should do then. Let me give you an example.

"One Sunday I had prepared very carefully. When time for the class session came, I found that the children were very much interested in a Chinese student who was visiting the church school. They wanted to talk about him.

" 'Do Chinese really eat rats?' Jack asked.

"I said, thoughtlessly, I admit now, 'Now, now, we have no time to talk about the Chinese this morning. Listen! Our lesson to-day is about . . ., and I want all of you to think about that.'

"When I went home, I was so disturbed by the results. My children were inattentive all during the class. They were restless and ran away as soon as I dismissed them. What should I have done? I see now that my first difficulty was that I was not thinking of the children's purposes but of my own. Also I realize that I missed an opportunity by ignoring the strong and worthy 'mind set' already aroused by curiosity about the Chinese student."

"You had two choices," commented Mr. Allen, slowly. "First, to set up a strong counter-attraction along the line of your own plans and so to get other nerve connections ready to act. Second, you could have followed the children's interest in the Chinese student—the better plan probably in this instance."

"What I really did was to try to suppress the children's purposes, to ignore their mental state and to teach according to my own interests. I can see now why the children were restless and inattentive and escaped as soon as possible, evidently on the trail of more knowledge about the Chinese."

"I think you have judged your own problem well, Miss Green," said Mr. Allen. "Too often has just such a capital opportunity for good teaching been ignored by teachers because we did not understand this law of mental readiness. There is no such thing as inattention. What we mean by inattention is attention or mental readiness in another direction."

"May I ask a question?" ventured Miss Jones. "Suppose a teacher is really not prepared to follow the un-

expected lead of the children. Even though it is a worthy one, she would be better able to help them later. Would she be justified in setting up counter-attractions along the line in which she was prepared?"

"Teachers often have to do that," replied Mr. Allen. "How else could they give adequate guidance? Sometimes they help the children to make plans that require outside work in order to develop their especial purpose. The children realize they can go no further on that purpose at the time, so they are then willing to go on to the plan the teacher has in mind. Are we ready to state the first law of learning now? When certain nerve connections in a child's brain are ready to act, to act gives satisfaction, not to act causes annoyance. When they are not ready to act, to act causes annoyance. Attention is based on readiness or mind set. Strong purposes grow out of and also stimulate this readiness. The teacher's first step in causing children to learn is to know how to secure readiness or to discover and use an already existing mind set which may lead to valuable religious learnings."

"Do let us take time to talk a little more about how we can get children 'ready' to learn," said Miss Jones. "That is what I am 'ready' to think about."

Making the Environment Suggestive. "Good," said Mr. Allen. "The teacher may introduce into the church school environment materials and persons which cause purposes to develop naturally. The more skillfully she arranges her surroundings, the less actual instruction she will find necessary in securing readiness. We find this use of the surroundings a valuable method in the public school. In other words, put, where the children can see them, pictures, objects, storybooks, and other materials that will lead naturally into questions, purposes,

and plans. Introduce to the class persons, questions or problems that will have the same effect."

"May I tell about a plan that we used," asked Mrs. Abbott, "and let Mr. Allen judge if it is an example of this use of environment? We hoped that the children would plan a reception for the Japanese dolls when they were touring this country. So on Sunday the children found storybooks and poems about Japan upon their class tables. There were Japanese pictures placed on the screen. Materials and pictures dealing with other subjects had been put away. Some of the children formed small groups and older children and teachers were chosen to read to them or to explain the pictures. Upon its table a third grade discovered magazines telling of the Japanese dolls and their receptions in various cities. There were pictures of the receptions. During a conference period, the children reported on their readings, and on the pictures. The department sang 'The Father's Care.'[2] When I announced that the dolls were coming to our city and church, the children were delighted and immediately wanted to make plans for a reception and for entertaining guests from other church schools in our community.

"The reception was well attended. It was interesting to watch the children assume responsibility for their guests from other churches. Pictures of our boys and girls with the dolls were taken. The children suggested singing 'The Father's Care' at the reception. A visitor who had traveled in Japan told of her friendly contacts there. Plans for showing friendliness to some Japanese children in the United States followed the reception and were carried out. Months afterward the children could recall the details of the experience.

[2] *Song and Play for Children,* Danielson and Conant.

Other enterprises affording friendly relationships with the Japanese have followed."

"A good example," commented Mr. Allen. "Readiness was secured and a strong purpose developed by the informal introduction of the children to the materials as soon as they arrived and by the discussion of them during the conference period. Notice what materials were used to keep the children working on this purpose: stories, pictures, songs and conversation. Notice also that the surroundings offered no distractions and that learning began when the children arrived. Many a Sunday morning class period has been spoiled so far as religious teaching was concerned because this period of arriving was wasted."

Visitors Arouse Purpose. "Sometimes an unusual visitor, such as a missionary or a person of another race, will stimulate the children to purpose, to get into this state of readiness," said Mrs. Brown. "A visit from a group of Indians once aroused so great an interest in Indians on the part of my class that an extended and worth-while enterprise followed."

Recall of Past Activities. "Sometimes a recall of what the children did in the past is the springboard," added Miss Jones. "Our class record book has proved valuable for this purpose. One day the children, looking through the record of their second-grade work, remembered how, the year before, they had sent to an Indian school books illustrating the hymn, 'Tell Me the Stories of Jesus.' They decided to repeat the activity, sending the books this time to an immigrant play center. This activity fitted in with different teaching units in two years' work, you see. Many stories of Jesus and of his friends carrying on his work were told or recalled. An admiration for Jesus was kindled. The

children learned the hymn. Studies of our large pictures were included, the pictures corresponding to the small ones pasted in the booklets. All the plans were introduced quite naturally. Acting as a friend of Jesus became a standard of conduct to judge group conduct problems. The activities really strengthened our class purpose, carrying on the work of Jesus, although they were different from what I had planned to do. We do not always have to depend on past experience at church either. I often start with some home event which arouses a group interest."

Use of Materials. "Stories, hymns, or poems strong in activity-suggestion will help the group to get into a state of 'readiness.' 'A Good Thanksgiving,' by Marion Douglas, started my Thanksgiving plans last fall," said Mrs. Branch.

"And 'God's Dark,' by John Martin, started my class on a series of class sessions on how God's laws are a blessing," added Miss Morgan.

"Pictures will do the same thing," added Miss Green.

"And sometimes the worship service will arouse a purpose that carries over into the class period," suggested Mrs. Abbott, "or vice versa."

The Children's Own Problems. "The children's own problems often furnish purpose if the children are in so natural an environment that these problems come to the surface," suggested Mrs. Allen.

"Indeed they do," said Miss Green. "On a walk one Sunday James ran up on a lawn and broke off a spray of forsythia, Charles cut a switch from the dogwood, and Jean plucked a tulip. The way I felt about this conduct led very naturally into plans which gave practice in honesty, respecting property rights and neighborliness."

"Well, children sitting in rows or around tables passively following the lead of an adult cannot be expected often to introduce important problems," added Mrs. Abbott.

"Suppose there is just no chance to have a free time with the children, what then?" asked Miss Morgan.

"Recall daily events which lead the children to talk about their experiences and problems will naturally be introduced," replied Mr. Allen. "However, there are usually more chances for freedom than teachers realize."

The Teacher's Part When Children Purpose. "Mr. Allen, we are told to start with the children's interests and purposes," Miss Jones said. "Is the teacher herself ever to try to develop new interests and purposes? It seems to me we would be going round in circles unless we did."

"You would," said Mr. Allen. "Expand a child's narrow interests as well as enrich those he already has. Children are glad to follow the suggestions of a teacher in whom they have confidence. Her interest in a plan often leads to a real stimulation of theirs. Think how they like to imitate. Some persons in their reaction from teaching which was largely teacher-centered have gone to the other extreme and say that purposes should be started only by children. One of my teachers once remarked: 'That is not a real purpose. The children did not suggest it.' Regardless of who makes the suggestion, any plan with religious value and which becomes a purpose of the children is worthy of use."

"Mr. Allen, may I read a quotation from a very helpful book?" asked Miss Green.

"Please do," said Mr. Allen, noting the title, as Miss Green held up the book. "I know that book. It is a good one on this subject."

"'We have had a foolish notion in some of our modern educational theories that children do not like to do what the teacher suggests, but are more eager to do anything which any child might suggest. This notion is utterly contrary to real facts, as any student of children knows. Children welcome and enjoy suggestions by adults as to what to do next.'"[3]

"Indeed, many purposes that Primaries accept with keenest interest will never be introduced unless the teacher suggests them," declared Mrs. Abbott. "The children still know very little beyond the daily round of their own narrow lives."

Using Normal Primary Interests. "In using the interests of children to produce readiness," continued Mr. Allen, "the teacher must not appeal to all interests, since some have little religious value. She will learn to use those interests only which will help the child to grow religiously and only in those ways which foster the best religious growth. Just following the lead of a child's fleeting interests is worse than foolish, for mother and teacher and child become the slaves of his caprice. Neither would a child at his best naturally flit from interest to interest."

Appealing to the Highest Interest. "The highest possible interest to which the child will respond and the one which involves both challenge and difficulty should be used."

"I am afraid I do not understand just what you mean, Mr. Allen, by highest interests," Mrs. Abbott said. "Give us an example."

"Many of the interests to which some teachers and church-school teachers appeal are animal rather than

[3] Edwin H. Reeder, *Simplifying Teaching*. Used by permission of Laidlaw Brothers, publishers.

human in their stage of development," answered Mr. Allen. "Take this matter of giving prizes, for example. Giving a prize for making a doll house in a vacation church school or the 'best' scrapbook on Sunday is like giving a horse a lump of sugar for nodding his head when you ask him a question. A child is not an animal and should not be taught by the same methods. He is a human being with a God-given ability to make choices and place values on what he does. So long as he must find his satisfaction in some reward outside of the activity itself and the reason for it, he is acting on the animal plane. When the prize comes in, the religious learning flies out of the window, to paraphrase an old proverb. The competitive appeal, winning out over another, is not likely to train in Christian ways of working or feeling. It is directly opposed to co-operation."

"In other words, the way we treat our children and lead them to act toward each other is just as much a part of their religious teaching as what we say or get them to accomplish," said Miss Morgan. "I can even teach unchristian ways of acting among the class group while I am trying to teach Christian attitudes toward some other nation. There have been times when I was too interested in making a good showing."

"The same is true of prizes for attendance or Bible study, is it not?" asked Mrs. Brown.

"Any activity which has to be motivated with a material reward should be questioned," replied Mr. Allen. "If a piece of work is properly chosen, the worthwhileness of the activity is all the stimulus necessary. Teachers often think that artificial rewards are essential when they might easily be omitted. Religiously, the appeal to the low interest is dangerous also because

it teaches a child to expect material rewards for religious effort. The teacher should avoid the trivial appeals to interest. There is another law of learning involved also—that of many learnings going on at one time, some directly, some indirectly. Some of the most important learnings in religion are included among the latter. But we had better talk about that later and go on to the second of the three major laws now."

The Law of Exercise

Learning Through Practice. "We now come to that law of learning which is best known. 'Practice makes perfect,' we say, and, again, 'We learn by doing.' Not only must a nerve connection be ready to act but it must have practice in acting. This practice makes the Christian response a habit.

"Having good habits is necessary for conduct control and for emotional stability. Suppose each time that you faced a problem involving honesty, for example, you had to decide on even the smallest detail of being honest, how helpless you would be in facing the most important crises of your life! Suppose every time you entered a house of worship you had to establish all over again every association with God. How far in grace would any of us ever progress? No one can be counted upon to be honest unless he is honest habitually, without thinking about it. No one is free to practice the higher spiritual ways of living until the simpler ones are habits. May I borrow your book, Miss Green? Thank you. There is a helpful quotation here: 'Exercise really means the repeated use of mental connections. Learning is frequently said to consist of making brain paths in the mind. The metaphor is clear. If one continually walks along a certain line in a lawn, a path will be

worn. . . . Learning consists in making paths in the brain over which we walk at will.' "[4]

"Paths in the mind that firmly establish Christian habits of living—is that what you mean?" asked Miss Jones, and Mr. Allen indicated that this was exactly what he meant.

Children Learn What They Practice. "We teachers need to remember that what is practiced is what will be learned," commented Miss Jones. "That law will keep me from thinking that my class knows a thing just because I have told it."

"As the children live in the class group they must practice the Christian ways of doing things together. They get knowledge, but, better still, they actually learn how to use knowledge to work out their Christian purposes. They form habits of sharing, of living, of helping by practicing sharing, giving, and helping. They learn the Christian meanings and values of what they do," added Mrs. Abbott.

"Some Christian conduct cannot be practiced at church school, for it applies to other human relationships like those in the home. What are we going to do about that?" said Miss Jones.

"Then we can show the Christian value of the practice when it goes on successfully elsewhere; arouse a desire to do it and give ideas of how to do it. This will often be true in meeting home problems with children," answered Mrs. Abbott.

Attitudes Learned by Practice Also. "Children not only learn ways of doing and thinking, but, most important, they learn ways of feeling both toward God and man. A child needs practice in feeling right just as

[4] Edwin H. Reeder, *Simplifying Teaching*. Used by permission of Laidlaw Brothers, publishers.

much as practice in doing or thinking right. These habitual ways of feeling really go to make up the child's attitudes toward life."

The Law of Effect

Importance of Attitude. "Let us go on to the last of the major laws," said Mr. Allen. "All of us know that practice alone does not always make perfect. I have known boys to study Latin for four years and hate it. The way a child feels about what he practices makes all the difference. A child may go to Sunday school under parental pressure for years and yet never darken the doors of a church as a man. The way he felt about going taught him a deep distaste for the church."

An Example. "May I give an example?" inquired his wife. "Several years ago when I attended the State Teachers' Convention with Mr. Allen, I slipped away on Sunday morning to attend a Primary Department and get some new ideas. During the class session I was taken to visit a third grade. It was just before Promotion Day. The teacher confided to me just before the class period started that the children were 'dumb,' but she hoped they would know their verses by Promotion Day and make a good showing. That class session was a drill lesson of the dullest sort. The teacher seemed to have no interest in what the children thought or felt about learning the Bible passages. Just at the end of the period, one of the more active children said to her neighbor: 'Let's get out of here as quickly as we can. I hate this.' I did not have high hopes of genuine interest in the Bible or in the church developing in such a class. The drill was accompanied by annoyance and dullness. That visit certainly has made me try to get

my children to see a purpose back of memory work and to connect it with worship or some other satisfying experience. It has taught me to be careful of my use of other plans also."

Using Pain or Annoyance. "Connecting pain or annoyance with wrongdoing is just as necessary as connecting satisfaction with right conduct," continued Mr. Allen. "If a teacher just reprimands a child but protects him from the group disapproval and the extra work his wrongdoing has made, she will make a mistake. In fact, he may enjoy her especial attention."

"Any wise mother knows that protecting a child from the consequences of his own wrongdoing is the softest sort of discipline," commented Mrs. Brown. "I did not know before though that a law of learning was involved. Teachers have to treat children very much as wise mothers would."

"Thank you so much, Mr. Allen," said Mrs. Abbott. "You have helped us to begin our study of the most important laws of learning. But you mentioned, in speaking of prizes, that there were other laws. Will you come to our next meeting and help us to think about them? Would you have time?"

"I will take the time," answered Mr. Allen. "You have helped me by your comments."

Other Laws of Learning

Law of Associated Learnings. So at the next meeting Mr. Allen was present once more.

"I want to talk about indirect learnings first," he said. "A child does not learn one thing at a time. If he did, teaching would be a comparatively simple process. He not only learns the direct thing taught but he also learns ways of feeling about what is taught,

ways of feeling about the school, ways of reacting to the teachers, judgments about the worthwhileness of the entire experience. Suppose, for example, a third grade decides to learn the one hundredth psalm in order to recite it in a Thanksgiving Worship service. The teacher tells the story of the psalm. A strong desire to learn it develops, so that the drill is a real purposeful activity. At times a desire to pray develops. The superintendent shows a friendly appreciation of the effort. Did not this class learn much more than the psalm? Tell me what some of the indirect learnings might be."

"Ideas of God and fellowship with him," answered Miss Green.

"Ideas and attitudes toward the Bible as an interesting book," added Miss Jones.

"Attitudes toward each other and ways of working together," added Mrs. Brown.

"Attitudes toward the teacher, the superintendent, the church school," was Mrs. Abbott's contribution.

"Who will say that even the direct learning of the psalm was more important than these indirect and associated learnings?" continued Mr. Allen. "A teacher must take into consideration all possible learnings in making her plans. Contrast this example of memorizing with that of the group preparing for Promotion Day that Mrs. Allen described last time. Do you not see the importance of a consideration of all total learning involved in a class session?"

"Indeed," said Miss Green, "I am beginning to think that learning to be a really good teacher is a life-long adventure!"

Associating New Ideas with Past Knowledge. "Children also learn by thinking through some new idea in terms of some past knowledge. I once heard a mother

remark to a child of six, 'See how high the whitecaps are!' and the child, puzzled, replied: 'Do you mean nurses, mother? Where are they?' Many misunderstandings of Primary children grow out of the use of words too difficult for them. The human mind abhors a vacuum. What it does not understand it works out in terms of what it already knows. Queer notions often arise, of course."

Law of Association. "We were talking last time of how we must broaden a child's interest," continued Mr. Allen. "The law of association makes it possible for a teacher to help a child acquire broader interests."

"May I give an example and see if it illustrates what you mean?" inquired Miss Morgan. "Primary children are interested in babies, and a gradual interest in agencies which care for our little children may be built upon this natural one."

"Correct," said Mr. Allen.

"Knowing how to help children connect God with everyday events and see his purpose back of them is a very important knowledge for the Primary teacher," said Mrs. Abbott.

"Reverence for the beauties of the church and of nature may be developed through association," added Miss Jones.

"Don't forget," said Mr. Allen, "that the law can also be used to associate repugnance and disgust with the ugly, the mean, and the evil."

The Laws of Learning and Common Sense

"Now, Mr. Allen, sum up the laws of learning for us ordinary, everyday Sunday-school teachers so that we shall see how much common sense there is in them," remarked Mrs. Abbott. "The way they work

in everyday life has been growing on me as I have listened."

"On me too," said Miss Morgan. "I've just been wondering why it has taken so long to see that the way we teach children everyday things outside of school is the best way of teaching them in class."

"After all," said Mr. Allen, "using the laws of learning means sharing as far as possible a normal and beautiful life with children and making it meaningful to them. It means respecting and using the normal interests of children in worthy ways. All good parents have done this throughout the history of the race. This is the secret of the tremendous religious influence of the home.

"Every great teacher has used every law of learning described in this chapter. Just study the teaching methods of Jesus and you will see all these laws in operation. To-day in the church school you are seeking reverently to use the methods of good parents and great teachers, especially the Master Teacher, in guiding children to become followers of Jesus, to build a Christian character."

"Can we not study *how* to teach next?" asked Miss Green after the meeting had adjourned. "I just feel the need of a study of methods."

The others agreed. So let us leave this little group of teachers and start the same kind of studies they have chosen as their next step in preparation for teaching.

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For Study

1. Read the incident on page 70 referring to the reception for the Japanese dolls.

(1) Why did the leader use the storybook and pictures in introducing the reception for the Japanese dolls?

(2) Why did she invite the speaker?

(3) Would you have encouraged the children to start the additional enterprise of showing friendliness to Japanese children in the United States? Why or why not?

2. Write your own definition of at least two of the more important laws of learning.

3. The children were quarreling about chairs. "You've taken my chair," Joe shouted and tried to push Carl on the floor.

The teacher came toward the table.

"Mary's taken your chair," Joe told her, still very much ruffled.

"I don't mind," the teacher answered, good-naturedly. "I can sit here."

The atmosphere of the class became noticeably more peaceful. Account for the change in attitude.

4. A group of children were told by a wealthy member of the congregation that if they would learn certain passages in the Bible, he would pay them so much, on a graded scale, for each verse learned: ten cents for a short verse, twenty-five cents for a long verse. When the Primary superintendent remonstrated, he answered: "Well, the children will not learn the Bible unless they are paid to learn it, and I want them to learn it, so I will pay them."

(1) What do you think of his aim?

(2) What do you think of his method to accomplish this aim?

(3) What else did the children learn besides the Bible?

(4) What effect is such an incentive likely to have on a child's attitude toward and future use of the Bible?

(5) How high would you rate the interests to which he appealed?

CHAPTER IV

A TEACHING UNIT AND PLANS FOR A CLASS SESSION

Introductory Study

1. Make a copy of your plans for last Sunday's class session. After reading this chapter judge your methods of preparing for and of guiding a class session. What laws of learning did you use? Which did you not use? In the light of this chapter and of your experience with your group, what improvements can you make in your general ways of planning?

2. Examine one group of materials in the course of study that you teach. How do the materials for the various sessions connect with each other? Is the work of one session complete in itself? What unifies the sessions? What is the difference between a lesson and a class period?

Why Plans for Class Sessions Have Changed

Change in Point of View Means Change in Suggested Plans. Perhaps some Primary workers have been puzzled by the class sessions developed in the present graded courses of study. They have noticed how they are different from those in former Primary courses. Chapter III should make clear that plans arranged according to the former point of view of teaching will not accomplish what we aim to bring about now. Since the former lesson plans tried to carry out the point of view that teaching is imparting knowledge, there has had to

be a change in the class procedure properly to express the change in point of view of teaching.

The Former Lesson Plan. Studying a former Primary plan the teacher finds that it consisted of "Plans for Review"; a period called "Lesson Preparation," when the class was prepared to listen to the story. "Lesson Presentation" (through the story) followed. Then the third step was called "Lesson Expression." This last step often consisted of a drill on a Bible verse called a "Memory Verse" and sometimes there was a "Home Assignment." This is an excellent plan if a teacher is seeking only to impart knowledge or even to arouse emotions. A lesson was supposed to be taught each Sunday. It was separate from the work of every other Sunday, since each aimed to hand over to the children a certain piece of material. Only two connections between lessons were to be found. Sometimes related pieces of material stressing related ideas or facts about the same thought or character were grouped together. Second, a lesson was reviewed the following Sunday. This plan has been used quite generally for a number of years.

Gradually, however, teachers are abandoning this knowledge-centered lesson plan, because it does not accomplish what they want to do. These Primary teachers are learning to use a different kind of class procedure in order to accomplish their important aim of guiding life. They are thinking in terms of large units sometimes called teaching units. These units usually provide procedure for a number of class periods and are centered in certain worthy purposes of the class. They really are units of class living helping the children to grow in Christian knowledge, attitude and control of conduct.

Necessity for Better Preparation on the Teacher's Part. The fact that the child's learning is made central and the teacher follows his lead when possible does not mean that the teacher will not have to know as much or plan as thoroughly as she did formerly. She has to be better prepared than ever. It is much harder to guide successfully the purposes of others than it is to prepare certain fact materials and present them to a listening class. The teacher must be so well prepared that she can change, adapt, or even abandon her tentative plan whenever necessary. She will probably need more materials instead of less, so that she may help each child work out the class purpose along the lines of his greatest interest. She must know how to draw upon many phases of experience and use varied activities and methods. She will also need to master more materials in order to meet unexpected teaching opportunities. A teacher with only a story and a Bible verse at her command is not adequately prepared to guide and enrich religious life.

How to Regard the Present Courses of Study. The teacher cannot rely now so fully as in the past on the teacher's text. One of the strong points of the new courses is that they require choice of materials, methods, and even purposes by the teacher and her class. They are to be used as source materials when the class needs them, not as plans to be followed week by week without change.

Steps in a Teaching Unit

Studying Two Teaching Units

The teacher will need to know what a teaching unit is, how it begins, how it is developed and brought to a successful conclusion. If we study the following teach-

ing units, perhaps they will indicate steps in the planning and use of procedure, and will bring about increased understanding of the arrangements of the suggested procedure in the present courses of study.

Beginning to Purpose. On the first day in a vacation church school, the Primary leader asked the children what they wanted to do. She suggested that they look around the room and think before they answered. The departmental record book had been placed in a prominent place; so were pictures of children playing together. Suggestions were made that the children wanted to play, to cook, to do construction work, to sing. Then one child noticed the record of their Thanksgiving enterprise—a trip to a Children's Home.

"We had fun," several remarked. "I'd like to go out there again."

"How about asking them to come to see you?" the leader suggested. "People return visits, you know."

The children liked the idea.

"When can we have them?" asked Bob.

Planning. "If you were living out there, when would you like to be invited?" asked the leader.

The children decided that the guests should be invited for one morning and share in all they did. There should be some party features also. Later on they found that movies of a Bible story would be given one morning in each week for the entire school, so they decided to invite the children for that session. Some third-grade children were asked to arrange transportation. The leader suggested that she had better tell the Bible story during the worship preceding the picture. "They might not read the captions any faster than you do," she said, "and so they would not know what was happening." The picture was "Blind Bartimæus."

The story was told, the friendliness of Jesus stressed. This led to requests for other stories about his helpfulness.

The second- and third-grade girls were asked by the other children to prepare the refreshments. Two girls who were not cooking offered to make bean bags. Patricia suggested that "Friends" would be a good song for the worship period. The leader introduced "Friends of Jesus" as a new song. This song led naturally to a discussion of conduct problems which the children needed to watch at the party. The song furnished standards of judgment. The second grade offered to make favors.

Carrying Out or Executing Plans. So the group planned a party. The children worked for a week planning refreshments, favors, games, entertainment. At the party the children played together and worked together, and the group was so closely knit that one could hardly tell which were the visitors and which were the hosts. The older girls served and were charming.

As the guests started back to the Children's Home their hosts spontaneously waved to them. "We are coming to see you," they promised; and they did go.

Let us see if we can analyze the steps in this teaching unit. First, the children had one big purpose—to entertain another group. This integrated and used many of their smaller class purposes. The first step, then, was purposing. Then the children made their plans. This is the second step—planning. Third, they carried out these plans with the final result of a satisfactory party. This is the third step—executing.

Judging. The fourth step, not recorded here, was judging. In the conference period following the party

the teacher guided the children in talking over what happened. The children were very frank in criticisms of themselves, especially regarding disorderliness. There was a definite use in succeeding play periods of the rules made at this time.

Now let us study a second teaching unit, one carried out entirely on Sunday mornings by a second grade.

Purposing. This unit began with an incident told by the teacher. She had seen an exhibit of work done by a blind school. The children were so interested that she showed them some photographs of the handiwork. The dreadful handicap of being blind was mentioned. The teacher mentioned some of the causes for blindness. This led to speaking of blindness in the Near East. She said that there had always been blindness there even when Jesus lived there, that the plight of the blind had touched him. She told the story of Jesus and Bartimæus and showed the picture. John said that doctors helped blind children not to be blind. Amy told how her father had been reading about a blind lady who had learned to read (Helen Keller). The teacher told about how Friends of Jesus had helped the blind ever since he was so kind to them. She asked if the class would like to help. The children were delighted and asked how they might.

Planning. The teacher said there were a number of things they might do, and if they wished, she would write and ask what they could do best. Some of the children stayed after Sunday school to help her write the letter. The children posted it.

On the next Sunday the teacher showed a reply from the school for the blind. Several needs were listed and from among them the class selected helping to purchase a New Testament in Braille. There was a discussion of

how to get the money. Some money was placed in the class bank. The teacher had secured a page of Braille and the children enjoyed running their fingers over the raised figures. The teacher showed a picture of a New Testament in Braille. Tom compared its size with that of the class Bible. Joan spoke of how the blind children could learn to read all about Jesus and how kind he was to the blind. This led to a study of the picture, "Jesus and Bartimæus." The children recalled the story and enjoyed imagining Bartimæus seeing things he had only heard or touched or smelt before. This made a charming imaginative play and led to a prayer that they might be kind to blind persons also.

Executing. The third Sunday John opened the class session by telling about how he had seen a blind man try to cross a street and was afraid. "The autos just zipped by," reported John. "Then a man took him by the arm and led him across." The class thought this was being like Jesus. In reply to the question, "Did Jesus help any other blind people besides Bartimæus?" the teacher read from her Bible the story of the man at the Pool of Siloam. Amy had brought the story of the blind lady who learned to read (Helen Keller) and the teacher told the story very simply. The offering was counted. There was $2.50, Jean's father having sent a dollar because he wished to help too. The class decided to send this off and a letter was written. The teacher promised to inclose a check for the $2.50.

On the following Sunday the children reported incidents that their parents had told them about how blind persons had been cured or helped. The letter of thanks for the offering was read and the picture of Jesus and Bartimæus studied once more. The class session closed with a story of a little Princess who learned to see and

who thanked God for her eyes, and with the prayer poem, "Praise to God for Seeing."

Relation of Class Session to Teaching Unit. In any teaching unit there are four steps—purposing, planning, executing, judging—because there are four steps in a complete act of learning. Notice that in neither of the two units recorded were all four steps taken in one session. There is no reason why the teacher should try to teach a complete lesson every Sunday. Most plans will continue through a number of class sessions; a few may be completed on one Sunday. The work of each period helps to carry along the class purposes worked out in the teaching unit. The teacher does not expect to use the same kind of plans or materials every Sunday.

The teacher in the second teaching unit expanded one week's work as suggested in her course of study over four weeks. She omitted the materials suggested in her book for three Sundays because the class needed additional time. This will often have to be done, for no lesson writer can tell how each class using the lessons will adapt them to its own needs.

Use of Methods. Most of the commonly accepted methods and materials for Primary children were used as tools to carry out purposes. There was this fundamental difference: the children saw a definite worth and meaning in their activities and in all the materials, since they were means of accomplishing and enriching their own purposes. Stories, teaching a song, construction activity, picture studies, poems, letters, an offering, play, cooking, sewing and worship were all included for a definite reason.

Constant Interplay of Plans and Carrying Them Out. There was a constant purposing, planning, and execut-

ing anew. These steps were interrelated, not arranged in logical order. Additional purposes leading to other teaching units will probably arise. The children took each step themselves. "For learning to go on best, the learner should himself take each step in the process. . . . If the child is about to fail with any step, the teacher may properly intervene to save from failure; for final failure may mean discouragement and lessened learning. But the teacher will help best by helping the child to help himself."[1]

Teachers will realize how this type of class procedure is based on the laws of learning discussed in the preceding chapter. Consult Chapter III and see how purposing corresponds to readiness; planning and executing afford exercise with satisfaction and judging increases satisfaction, since it develops appreciation of accomplishment. The unsolved difficulties when judged cause new purposes to develop.

Problems to Face

Confidence in Ability to Use New Plans. Certain first steps must be taken by the teacher who is just beginning to use this new type of plan. She must learn to have confidence in her own ability. She does not expect to change from one type of plan to another even by meaning to do so. Her purpose is only the first step in learning, readiness. She must be willing to try again and again until she gains skill through practice. Her course of study is her guide, since it shows what other teachers have done.

Use Equipment and Time to Best Advantage. The teacher needs also to use her equipment to the best pos-

[1] Kilpatrick, *Foundations of Method.* Used by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

sible advantage. Often teachers will be hindered by the conditions under which they work. Crowded, bare rooms, with a number of teachers having to do work in the same room, offer hindrances to any teacher. Teachers need to work for better environmental conditions, at the same time that they use what they have to the best advantage.

The same thing is true about time. Primary teachers need more time, and if possible, meetings of the class at more frequent intervals than a Sunday-to-Sunday plan allows. The expanded Sunday period of three hours, the Vacation Church School, and week-day sessions are all suggested. For most workers the first two are easier to attain at present. While putting the present time to the best possible uses, teachers should still work for more time for religious education.

Planning for Sunday and Keeping a Record

A teacher will do well to keep a record book of her tentative plans and of how they work out in the class. In this record she states her aims, after reading those in her source book. She thinks in terms of each child's need when deciding on aims. Will this session help John be more kindly? How will it help Peggy to see that friends of Jesus do not snatch—and so on. The teacher thinks in terms of the large teaching unit. She asks herself, How can each class period help to complete the learnings supposed to be accomplished by this unit? She jots down questions that will get the children to think about the problem to be solved or to get them to purpose. Sometimes she thinks of incidents instead of questions that will help the class to think. She tries to decide which of the activities suggested in her book will furnish the best practice of the lesson to be learned. If

none seem so valuable as one she has in mind, she substitutes her own. Then the teacher lists her materials and jots down the methods that she will use. If she needs special materials like pictures, dolls, or other objects, construction materials, she gets all these ready. Then she masters the story she will probably tell or makes careful plans for a picture study or learns a poem or hymn. She thinks of what may be included as a prayer. This is her tentative plan. She is prepared to use it to guide the class period. After teaching she notes what actually happened and from this determines where to begin for the next session of the class. The plan book listed in the bibliography should be helpful to teachers.

The Place and Personality of the Teacher

Selecting and Testing Enterprises

When religious education becomes the guidance of Christian purposes, then the teacher becomes a selector. Most of the present courses for Primary children are written as source books and the teacher is urged to select from among their many suggestions those most suitable for the class purposes and to supplement the course at will. It is usually wise, however, to use a course of study as a basis, as it supplements the individual teacher's experience of religious needs of children with that of a number of other experienced Primary teachers.

Causing Children to Select Worthy Religious Purposes. Not all of the purposes of children have value in religious education. When the teacher has to judge between many purposes arising in her group, she soon discovers that this is true. Some purposes, worthy in

themselves, can better be accomplished by the public school This does not mean that the children will not sometimes do the same things at church school as at public school. There will be this essential difference. Christian meanings that the public school cannot set up will be added at church school.

Tests for Religious Purposes. The teacher needs to have certain principles in mind if she is to be a selector among purposes. The tests for these purposes are discussed in the following chapter.

Controlling the Church Environment of Children

Environment. The teacher guides and controls. She centers her activity on the children's. She makes plans for guiding theirs, not for leading them to accept only what she has planned. She controls the church environment so that it naturally causes children to think and plan.

Special Consultants. Most Primary teachers are not skilled in every activity through which Primary children work out their purposes. By using persons who have some special ability as consulting teachers, the teacher secures the influence of more personalities than her own for her children. The more Christian persons our children have fellowship with, the richer ideas of Christian character they will gain. The teacher thinks of herself and other persons as a part of the children's church environment.

Knowing When Important Crises Arise. Knowing when important points are reached in the class plans is one of her major tasks in guiding and controlling. The ability to utilize these crises in order to add Christian meaning to what is happening is one of the supreme tests of her skill.

The teacher of a certain third grade always planned how to help David to think and to find worshipful meanings in what went on and not to be absorbed in mere doing. On the other hand James had been spoiled by too much attention at school, the older children whom his mother taught making a plaything of him. He must be stimulated to do and not to be a passive onlooker. June, who made beautiful responses in worship, must be helped to put forth some effort which gave her a right to speak as she did. The Primary teacher knows how to stimulate all of the children. She does not teach only the quickly responsive children. Even Primary children must be treated differently. So the teacher seeks to lead the children to help with every phase of the activity at the same time that she respects their differences.

Co-ordinating Plans

The teacher is a co-ordinator. She keeps the entire teaching unit in mind, and if one part of it develops more rapidly than another, she follows the children's lead rather than forcing the arrangement found in her course of study upon the class. For this reason she must not try to teach one Sunday at a time, but must have in mind all the steps by which the teaching unit is developed. She may completely rearrange the order of the teaching units, and some not included in her course of study will be used if she really follows the children's lead (see page 156, Chapter VII, for one example). Of course she will be constantly modifying her plans as the class develops its work and adds new and more meaningful items. She also co-ordinates, through the departmental leader, her plans with those of other classes and departments.

Giving Information

The teacher is a consultant. When the children face difficulties, she is there to give information or directions which help the children to help themselves. For this reason she should be skilled in the kind of things required in children's activities; construction work of various sorts or the more indirect methods of helping children, story-telling, guiding conversation, using pictures and objects.

To say that she is not to give information is foolish. All of us need information at times, and for children not to be able to get it when they really need it is to divorce them from rightful assistance. The teacher needs to be keen enough to judge when the children can do the work themselves and when they cannot. They can be helped at each stage, in purposing, in making plans, in carrying them out, and in judging them. "She should see to it that the child becomes conscious of what he is doing and of the method which he is using."[2] Thus she lends meaning to his activity.

Making Religion Manifest Through Personality

The teacher along with other adults is the child's living example of Christian character. In all reverence we may say that she leads the way to Jesus by walking in his steps. Her life and her interpretation of life, her attitude and conduct toward the children and the other adults all help her to show concretely what the life of the kingdom of God is like. The law of love in all its gentleness and strength is made manifest in her. A teacher who is quarrelsome with her children, jealous of her own prestige in the church or community, defeats

[2] Lincoln School Staff, *Curriculum Making in An Elementary School.* Used by permission of Ginn and Company, publishers.

her own teaching. There is nothing meek or sentimental in love, so she need not fear this weakness if she triumphantly lives the life of love with her children. We know that this was Jesus' method with his disciples.

The following quotation says the same thing in another way: "God works through truth in awakening and quickening the human soul. But truth, in order to become an effective agency of the Holy Spirit, must be made vital through personality. Men and women, therefore, through whom the Spirit may speak and work are absolutely essential to success in any process of religious education. And this means men and women who know Christ and are Christlike in spirit and conduct. There can be no question as to the need for better-trained teachers. Technical training, however, can accomplish but little, if it is not shot through with that kind of love and holy zeal that is the outcome of vital religious experience."[3]

No quality of the teacher exceeds this in importance, just as Jesus suggested when he said that his followers were the "salt of the earth." The child catches the spirit of Christ through his contacts with lives filled with this spirit. This is the heart of the new point of view to teaching, of the new lesson planning. It makes it possible for the teacher to show a way of life by sharing it. The quality of our own Christian experience is the final test of our ability to develop Christian character. As Saint Augustine said many centuries ago, "One loving heart sets another on fire."

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What Would You Do?

1. A third-grade class was discussing public-school teachers.

"Mine is mean," said one.

Another child said: "I don't see why I have to mind Miss ——. She is not my mother."

A third said, "I like to tease my teacher and make her mad."

Has the church school any responsibility here? What is involved besides relations to public-school teachers? Could you plan a teaching unit to help the children meet this situation?

2. A third grade was sullen because the new first grade "didn't know anything." "We don't want them in here," they told their teacher. List the adjustments necessary in a Primary Department just following Pro-

motion Day. Plan a teaching unit to meet these problems. How are you going to get the children to accept the solving of this problem as a purpose of their own? What plans are likely to bring about friendly relations with the new children most quickly? Why is it not wise to wait until *after* Promotion Day?

CHAPTER V

GUIDING THE PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY OF PRIMARY CHILDREN

Introductory Study

1. Watch a group of Primary children playing in the neighborhood or on a playground for half an hour during three succeeding afternoons. List each play. Note any sex differences and differences due to age (first-grade as compared with third-grade interests). What opportunities to solve conduct problems arise?

2. What did you play when you were a Primary child?

3. When do parties have religious value for Primary children?

4. What is the difference between "handwork" and purposeful activity?

Place of Activity in Teaching

Learning Through Activity. Children learn by doing. The activity also is not considered an expression of a "truth" already taught but one method through which the child grows in his ability to understand and use a Christian value in daily life. As Dewey says, "He [the child] acts it out before he really takes it in."[1] For example, a group of children building a doll house for a day nursery are not "expressing" the command, "Be ye kind to one another." They are learning

[1] Dewey, *Imagination and Expression.* Used by permission of Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University.

one meaning of this Bible verse through working it out. Often the Bible verse could well be the last material used instead of the first. Then it would come at the end of the session or a number of sessions to add increased religious meaning to what the children have done. The wise teacher selects the best activities for the practice of the Christian ways of thinking, feeling, and acting which her Primary children need to learn.

Activities Determined By Class Purposes. In this chapter we begin a study of materials and methods suitable for Primary classes. So it seems necessary to repeat that methods of teaching and materials are not to be regarded or used separate from the class purposes and plans. The old-fashioned Vacation Bible School, with its separate periods for cooking, for sewing, for manual training and basketry, for games and for Bible study, presented an extreme example of how disjointed and unrelated the elements in a day's teaching program may be if the class does not use every method in order to carry out some central purpose which unifies them all. When teaching Primary children according to the plans discussed in the preceding chapter, it is necessary that every part of the class session help to complete the religious learning going on at the time. Certainly, no unrelated activities should be dragged in in order to "interest" the children. If the teacher introduces play, memory work, scrapbook making, or cooking, she does so because that activity is necessary successfully to carry out the class purpose.

Activity Should Involve All of a Child's Ability. Activity is not wholly physical. Unfortunately, some Primary workers have come to think of "handwork," often of a thoughtless "busy-work" type, when the word "activity" is mentioned. They usually visualize trivial

paper cutting, flimsy paper articles, or pictures thoughtlessly colored. There are many freer, larger, and more important forms of work for Primary children. If an activity were merely physical, it would have little educational or religious value, for it would not cause children to think and to feel as well as to do. Creative activities in which the best of a child's abilities are spontaneously released through the making of some beautiful thing, such as a poem, a story, or a picture, should be encouraged. Mental play is an activity seriously neglected in many church schools. Genuine joy resulting therefrom is rarely seen.

There may be an appeal to the beautiful in many of the activities introduced. Appreciation of a beautiful stained-glass church window is a genuine activity if the children respond to it and are absorbed by it. The Primary teacher to-day gives the broadest, not the narrowest, definition to the word "activity." She remembers that those activities into which children enter with purpose are the ones which cause them to grow and which lead to further worthy purposes.

When Are Activities Purposeful?

The Children's Own Purpose. Activities are purposeful when the class's entire thought and energy can be engaged in them and when the children identify themselves thoroughly with the class plans underway. The purpose is clearly that of the learners themselves. An activity is not purposeful when the teacher does the major part of the thinking, the planning, and even the work. The children half-heartedly enter in largely to win her approval or because there is nothing else to do except get into mischief. Many children do accept this alternative, as teachers know from experience. A

teacher may and should suggest that a class enter into purposes involving such activities as packing a missionary Christmas box, listening to or singing a hymn, sharing a story from a missionary reader, or learning by building an Oriental village how Jesus and his friends lived long ago in Palestine. The children's purposes will remain entirely too narrow religiously unless she makes suggestions. In each case the children may accept her suggestion and make the purpose their own. If they do, the activity becomes purposeful; if they do not, the purpose is the teacher's, and the children have not been stimulated. After the children have reached a real purpose they, and not the teacher, must carry it out if it is to be of any value to them. The teacher helps by stimulating, guiding, and giving necessary information. She does not do all of the work or all of the thinking.

Learning to Guide Purposeful Activities. It is very difficult to learn through brief weekly periods and under real handicaps of noise and crowded conditions to help children really to purpose and to carry out their purposes. Resourceful teachers are beginning to find ways of doing it, however. One way is by relating the work of one Sunday to that of the next and not jumping from one plan to another. Another is by encouraging the children to work at home on plans begun on Sunday. A second grade was making toys for the children coming into the department on Promotion Day and they were encouraged to work on the gifts at home. All except two children in a class of ten brought the completed toys on the following Sunday.

Purposeful activity causes the children to grow religiously by engaging them in plans which stimulate them to think, feel, and act in more Christian ways.

Then the purpose is central and all methods, including any special activities, are used as tools to further this growing ability to make Christian purposes and to carry them out.

Project Principle Instead of Project Method. Many teachers have called an activity a "project" if the children were physically active, using their hands, pasting, coloring, or cutting, even when the purposing and planning was entirely the teacher's work. Physical activity is no more necessary to a real project than is mental activity.

Many of these so-called "projects" have not been purposeful at all because they have been used like any other method to entertain children and have been teacher-directed. The teacher's point of view of teaching had to change before the activity could be a purposeful one for the children. It is better to speak of the project principle instead of the project method. Then the term expresses a point of view toward all class work instead of a special method. The project principle describes teaching that helps children to grow through making and carrying out worthy purposes which they regard whole-heartedly as their own. It must be "head work" as well as "handwork."

Choosing Activities

The types of activities for Primary children in the church school have increased so in the last decade that a teacher has often to choose the best among many possible ones. Certain tests should be used in order to choose the most valuable ones religiously.

Large Instead of Intricate Work. The first test is, Does the activity provide for large work and for freedom in work? Fine, intricate work is too complicated

for young children. Activities using the large muscles are to be preferred to those which require developed smaller muscles.

Freedom of Thought and Action. The activity chosen should be work which allows each child freedom of thought and action. Many activities which do this will be suggested by the children themselves when the surroundings in which they work are good ones. The teacher has helped the children to know that they are perfectly free to introduce accounts of their own new and fascinating experiences. She has made them so at home that they naturally introduce their religious problems. The teacher places emphasis on the most valuable contributions of the children. Only when their interests are narrow or barren in religious value should she take the lead and suggest those of greater religious value.

Challenge and Effort Cause Religious Growth. A helpful activity does not leave children at the same stage of religious growth at which they were before beginning it. It challenges them to genuine effort. Neither does it duplicate unnecessarily the work of a previous grade and give the children a sense of making no progress. Never should it be so easy that the class considers it "baby work." Activities nurture children religiously first, when they help them to carry out strong social purposes, doing for and sharing with others.

The teacher strengthens the religious value of the activity by helping the child to see worshipful meaning in what he does. In other words, an activity is religious when it helps a child to practice Christian conduct toward others and to grow in Christian attitudes toward them. Getting the activity done is not so im-

portant as being sure that the attitude and conduct stimulated thereby are Christian. Wise teachers do not get so interested in mere doing that they forget what the religious aim for using the activity is.

An activity has value in religious education also when it helps a child to get a clearer grasp on some knowledge, appreciation, or skill of value to him religiously. Planning an Indian exhibit has value religiously when it is a natural part of class plans and helps the child to understand and appreciate Indians and have more brotherly feeling toward them. If making an Oriental village helps a child to feel more closely akin to Jesus, then it has religious value. A chart recording incidents showing courage is of value for third grades when it gives clearer definitions of Christian courage.

Activities have religious value for Primary children when they help them to express the sense of beauty, wonder, or reverence aroused by some experience. A child may be led to find religious meanings in daily occurrences when this type of activity is chosen. Fuller discussions of this method will be found under creative expression on pages 151, 180, 193, 225.

The Child's Own Work. The teacher should use activities which do not drag out far beyond the child's ability to be interested and which he can really do himself. Children do not grow through doing a small part and the teacher the larger part of a piece of work too difficult for the class.

Entirely too many of our Primary activities in the past have either been infantile in their challenge, like coloring cards, or they have been so difficult that the activity was the teacher's, not the child's.

Co-operative in Preference to Entirely Individual

Work. The children should, if possible, work co-operatively on an activity. A doll house which a second grade makes together usually stimulates many more natural religious learnings than individual work would provide.

Work may be social and shared and still allow each child to choose the part of the work with which he wishes to help. Probably there has been entirely too much of the "lock step" in children's activities in the church school of the past, each child doing what every one else did. Children have definite preference in activities as well as grown persons. The following incident gives an example of co-operative work allowing for individual effort: A class planned a Christmas basket for a needy family. Different children accepted certain parts of the task. Some children prepared the lovely basket; another group made toys; still another made cookies, and several other children in the class made and filled stockings. The children chose where they wished to work.

One Activity Leads to Another. Fifth, the best activities for children are those which are so like real life that other problems and plans naturally grow out of them. They should never seem forced or artificial. Then one Sunday's session naturally leads to the next and affords unbroken growth for the children.

Using Suggested Activities. In many of the present Primary courses of study there are a number of activities suggested under each teaching unit. The teacher should select those best suited to her class and let the children make their choice from among them. If the class purposes lead to activities more worth while than any suggested, these, not the ones in the book, are to be used.

Activities Which Primary Classes May Use Purposefully

Play

Play Furnishes Natural Teaching Situations. Play is the one absorbing activity of a Primary child. Leave him to himself and he plays; that is, he enters into some activity from which pleasure is obtained with no thought of an additional reward. Play is valuable because the leaders of children are looking for teaching opportunities that are lifelike. None could seem more natural to children than play. In this natural setting any of the problems of daily life are likely to become uppermost at any time—problems of fighting, of honesty, of fair play, of consideration for others, of care for others younger or sick, or considering the good of the group, of sharing, of truth-telling. Met in this natural setting the solutions of these problems have all the gripping reality of life. For example, a Primary class had the habit of tale-telling. They were rather disobedient to necessary orders also. In the midst of a group of lessons stressing co-operative living, the leader introduced a musical marching game in which the children must obey signals exactly or sit down. The one rule was that everyone must tell on himself but on no one else. The children made this rule. The children not only enjoyed the game but they practiced with satisfaction, responding to orders and telling on no one but oneself. This game was played by a third grade which stayed after Sunday school on several Sundays. Often classes do this when they become especially interested in some plan. The play approach to conduct problems is much more helpful to children than a mere discussion of their problems, since it gives actual

practice in living the right way instead of talking of it. A too direct approach may make children priggish.

Play Broadens a Child's Interests. Play is valuable because it gives children new glimpses of life. A class playing the games of another race has had an enjoyable experience in common with that race. The attitude toward the other race is more intelligent. The children are more convinced of the worth-whileness of the other children. They feel that they are like the far-away children themselves. For this reason missionary plans often include games of other lands.

Play Adds Purpose and Incentive. A second grade was learning to do in better ways its part at home; they were putting forth real effort to practice these ways. The leader suggested that perhaps the other children in the department would like to hear about their achievements. The second grade suggested a play as a means of sharing their new knowledge. Week by week they added to the play new parts from their stories, poems, songs, and practice of helpfulness at home. The very organization of the plans and materials stimulated the children to further effort and also to judge what they had done and to ponder on what they had learned. No additional time was required for this plan. The class came early in order finally to put the parts of the play together. Play may be utilized to give additional incentive for mastering a task in order to share what is learned with others. This is often true of dramatic play.

This form of dramatic play is probably more natural to Primary children and therefore more valuable than the mere dramatization of stories. Much of the free play of children is a dramatization of the daily happenings around about them. Once the play of a seven-year-

old girl was observed throughout a summer. Day after day she used paper dolls to carry out dramatic recalls of the incidents of her daily life. Rarely did she dramatize a story. She dramatized life.

Play an Entrance Into a Fuller Life. Doctor Coe says that this spontaneous play of childhood furnishes a genuine entrance into the life of society. A little girl playing dolls should have a finer appreciation of what the mother does for her children. A group of children playing store can face all sorts of problems of honesty, courtesy, interdependence, and so on. Even the traditional games of childhood which Primary children like so much and which are handed down by the older children are dramatizations of common life occurrences.

Playing With Gifts. A second grade who made a doll house for a fresh air camp played with it carefully for several days during a vacation school. When the package was boxed, one of the girls said, "Well, I hope they like it just as much as we do."

Children should sometimes be allowed to play with the articles that they make for others, in order that they may get a sense of the article's worth and be better able to judge of their own efforts. Sometimes when the article is perishable—for example, a May Basket—it is well to give the child additional material to make one for himself at home so that he is better able to appreciate the feeling of the one to whom the gift will be sent. A second grade brought storybooks to send at Christmas to three little girls. The teacher took time to read from them in order to help the children learn the value of their own efforts.

Play Periods. Children will also wish to have definite play periods. These too should link up with the class plans. Children may learn missionary games if a mis-

sionary enterprise is under way. A little time before or after the session or an occasional play hour during the week may be arranged if the teacher has only the brief Sunday period.

Worship services can be intimately related to the problems arising in the play period. At other times games should be chosen which give practice in solving some problem which the class faces. An example is reported in the account of the marching game described above.

Play Periods With Other Groups. Teachers sometimes arrange for groups which are strange to each other or are different in race, class and opportunity to play together. Such a play time is described in the preceding chapter. Primary children have a narrow social experience and the church-school teacher may help to broaden it.

This method has many dangers and difficulties, however. The play period should never be planned unless the workers can be sure that the children will come through it with no traces of snobbery or with no overdeveloped sense of their own goodness and kindliness. After all, the aim is a more Christian attitude between the groups and not a play period in itself. It seems safe to say that the play period had better be based on other friendly experiences between the groups, not precede them. The play period described in the party given for the Children's Home (see page 88) was not the first contact that the children had had with each other. The children giving the party had been to the home, had been received beautifully there, had enjoyed riding the pony and watching the goat. There was no one-sidedness to the experience; they really wanted to see each other again.

Characteristics of Primary Play. Primary children

like games with a good deal of bodily activity. Running and ring games are examples. They like games with simple rules also. There usually must be a strong imaginative and dramatic appeal. The Primary is a very easy group for which to plan games, since every normal adult remembers the traditional games, like "Farmer in the Dell," "I Tisket I Tasket," and "Oats, Peas, and Beans," dear to her own childhood. Games with a slight element of competition like "Cat and Mouse" are enjoyed. The children like "Bouncing Ball," and the older ones are beginning to like "O'Leary" and other games requiring considerable skill. Small groups like to play "Store" and "Mother and Children."

There is a difference in the play interests and abilities of the first and of the third grades. The third grade is beginning to like the more complex games of Juniors. The first grade still enjoy the plays of the older kindergartner such as "Looby Loo," and "Did You Ever See a Lassie?" Sometimes the children should play within their own class groups and sometimes they should make the necessary compromises to play together as a department, since they are close enough in interest for this to be possible. They get practice in consideration when they do so. If the group is a very large one, it should be divided with first-, second-, and third-grade children in each group.

Then too the teacher remembers that many other activities not labeled definitely as play but which are built upon the interests of children will be entered upon in a real spirit of play.

Dramatization

Spontaneous. When dramatization is a genuine activity, it is largely spontaneous and is carried out by the

children themselves. They do the most of the thinking required and the teacher acts as a guide and a consultant.

When Children Dramatize. Children dramatize when they have a vivid experience on which to draw, whether an actual experience or a familiar story. Sometimes one child more creative than others will take the lead. The dramatization reported on page 181 is an example.

Dramatizing Stories With Meaning. Children dramatize colorful stories which have action and meaning in the light of the children's own plans. A group was buying a gift for their classroom. They decided to dramatize the story of the gifts for the tabernacle based on Exodus 35. 1 to 36. 7 and play it when they presented the gift. So absorbed did one child become that spontaneously he pulled off his sweater, exclaiming, "Here, take my purple sweater!" He was evidently remembering the command to "bring the purple!" The group played the story over and over again with real joy. This is an almost perfect story for dramatization, with its many objects—silver, gold, brass, purple, scarlet and blue cloth—with its dialogue, and with its action. Where mental action predominates, dramatization is not easy. For obvious reasons Bible stories in which Jesus is a character should not be dramatized.

A Purpose for the Dramatization. Children dramatize best when there is a genuine motive for the activity. If the dramatization is a summary of a group activity, as in the case of the Helpers Play described above, the class should work out the details itself. Dramatization should be a natural part of the class session and should not be used as an unrelated activity. If the teacher has no separate classroom, she will prob-

ably have to use some other activity unless a vacant place may be found somewhere in the building. One Christmas a third grade decided to present Arthur Guiterman's "A Christmas Carol Come to Life" at the party for their parents. The children added many original touches and worked out very effective costumes. They planned their groupings on the stage and added a Christmas carol, "Wind Through the Olive Trees," as a prelude. There were very effective additional touches made to the speech of the Wise Men. One boy borrowed his mother's gold sugar urn and held it dramatically. This class did not have a separate class room. They used the church kitchen for practice. A resourceful teacher may usually find a way. The children like a play like this one, which they can expand by adding original elements.

How Children Differ in Dramatization. Children differ greatly in their ability to use dramatization as a spontaneous form of expression. Some groups enjoy it, others are self-conscious. Probably differing kindergarten experiences account partly for the difference. First-grade children dramatize quite spontaneously with little interest in detail or properties. The third grade is likely to need a genuine purpose. Certain properties will seem important to them, since the children consider a simple dramatization beneath their new-found dignity. They will work out the details thoroughly and enjoy using simple costumes.

Background Materials. A children's library accessible for constant reference is helpful. In their dramatization of missionary or Bible stories, a trip to a museum may prove helpful in developing background. The older children like to paint the scenery for a dramatization if a really ambitious one is to be given. They work first on smaller sheets of paper and then

the best work may be repeated on large sheets of unprinted newspaper, 24 x 36 inches.

Children enjoy introducing the fairy element. An example is shown in the child introducing rain and sunshine fairies in the dramatization reported on page 181. A group of children dramatizing the poem "The Song of the Seasons" suggested that each season "be a fairy." Then the group went busily to work deciding on the costumes for each fairy.

How the Teacher Helps Children to Dramatize. The teacher who wishes to help the children carry out some class purpose by a dramatization guides their motive for giving the dramatization. Especially is this necessary with the older Primary children. The teacher does not ask children to dramatize an unfamiliar story. In fact the suggestion had best come from them. The leader helps the children to organize the steps or acts, one by one, by asking leading questions. She may jot down each incident as it is developed. The class decides on the dialogue. As they develop it, the teacher writes it down for future use by the children taking the parts. If the class forgets important parts, the teacher recalls them by questioning. Children have such active imaginations that the stories are very real to them. So they will, sometimes, leap large, important sections. The teacher is ready to lend aid in choosing and making costumes also.

Many simple forms of dramatic play should develop as spontaneous accompaniments of large purposes. For example, the second grade made cradles for the nursery children and enjoyed playing with them for a little while. They made an Indian game to send to another group and went out on the church lawn and played Indians ringing the stake.

Value of Dramatization. Dramatic play is important as a method of developing the social give-and-take so essential in training Primary children. It helps them to interpret life also. A Primary group playing store with a skillful teacher present can understand the groceryman's contribution to life as well as learn how all peoples must depend on each other.

Parties

Religious Value. In the past we have not thought of parties as having educational value, largely because the teachers have done most of the required work and have gained any growth in religion from them. The secret of the religious value of parties lies in the opportunities which they afford to practice many desirable forms of Christian conduct. They offer opportunities to share, being hosts and guests, to work for others, to play fairly, to take turns, to put the common good before one's own wishes, to be honest, to take part in the fellowship of the church. Thus the party affords a very delightful way of providing practice for many of the essential Christian conduct controls.

The Children's Own Work. Parties have the greatest value for children when they are given by the children themselves. They should have a real desire to give the party and should work out all the plans. If sacrifices are to be made, the children should not be shielded from making them. In the party described in Chapter IV the little girls did not make quite enough lemonade. The teacher noticed that they were not serving themselves. "We are waiting, for there is not enough," Dorothy whispered; "we don't mind." The child's face showed that her interest in the success of the party was greater than her interest in food. Is not helping a

child to substitute higher for lower satisfactions one of the important tasks of the Christian teacher?

Sam threw his lollipop stick across the room and caused some disorder among the children. When the children were talking about the party later on, Sam said, "Next time I'll keep sticks to myself." There was no slipping back into the old disorder at the next party. He seemed to appreciate the teacher's notice of his improvement. The children should be helped to judge their own conduct after parties and plan to practice more Christian ways of acting.

Parties an Important Part of Class Work. Parties are not just supplementary activities in a Primary class or department. They are important steps in teaching desirable Christian conduct. When suggestions for parties are made in the course of study that you teach, there will probably be need for the party. Then the teacher will do well to suggest the party to the class.

Parties do not have to be elaborate. A chance to play and a few cookies will provide the setting for an intergrade party.

Trips and Excursions

Value. Taking children on trips is an activity which often leads to worthy purposing and furnishes a great deal of information for carrying out plans also. It increases the child's sense of the worth-whileness of what they are doing since it supplies a delightful accompanying experience.

Types of Trips. Trips may be made to museums or libraries to gain information about other lands and peoples. They may be made to firehouses and other public centers in order to gain appreciation of public

workers. They may be made to bakeries and dairies to help in the development of appreciation of the interdependence of people. A trip to a farm may have the same value. The child should understand better how all God's children work together for their mutual safety and welfare after such trips.

The children may deliver their own gifts at Homes for the Aged, Day Nurseries, or other centers. Often they will enjoy sharing songs, stories, memory passages with the persons visited and delightful worship experiences may develop. Richness will be lent to both worship and the experience.

Then there may be informal trips to ask information or for pure pleasure. The children are planning an Easter gift. They decide on flowers and someone must consult the florist. Why not the children? When religion means living life according to the life and teachings of Jesus and finding fellowship with God as one does, then the more helpful contacts a child makes the better. It is splendid too how co-operative, intelligent, and helpful most adults are when they have contacts of this sort with children. One teacher found a florist her most able assistant and the children's unfailing friend at Easter. Walks are an example of trips for pleasure and for appreciation of nature. Going out of doors to feed birds or to enjoy the snow lends a vividness to teaching an appreciation of winter that no amount of talking could provide.

The Teacher's Plans for the Trip. The teacher should seek to help the children avoid waste of time. If the children are going to a library or a museum to seek information about Oriental houses or about China, the leader should know in advance how to direct them so that their attention will be centered on the purpose

in hand. Wandering aimlessly through a museum will hardly be profitable.

If a home or a shut-in is to be visited, the leader should be familiar with all restrictions and should have prepared the way. There should be a clear understanding on the children's part regarding acceptable ways of behaving. The children should be held responsible for their conduct and for as much of the success of the plan as is practical. First-hand contacts are always to be sought for the children. The teacher does not do all of the outside work and merely report to the children about any of the tasks that they may accomplish themselves.

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For Study

1. Plan a play hour for Primary children. How can you make this hour an integral part of your present plans and purposes? What games will you play? List

conduct problems arising during the hour. What suggestions for future class work do you learn during the hour? Plan to help solve at least one problem of truth-telling or of obedience in this play period.

2. Study the stories in the Primary course that you teach. Check those that are probably suitable for dramatization. How would a trip to an Indian exhibit in a museum be likely to stimulate dramatization? Why would encouraging the children to bring some of their toys to church school, especially to vacation or week-day school, be likely to encourage informal dramatic play?

What Would You Do?

One Sunday morning a Primary teacher was puzzled to know what lead to follow with her class. Some of the children had had difficulties with the Negro sexton before she arrived. They had meddled with arrangements in the kindergarten room. When the sexton reproved them they had been very unkind in their remarks. The children were emotionally upset. Here were leads involving racial problems and abuse of the common property of the church. The teacher found that Randolph, one of the class, had just had his tonsils removed and was sick in bed. Here was another lead, helpfulness to the sick as an activity of Jesus' Friends. Should she follow that lead? Several little girls had found Copping's "Hope of the World" in the picture file and wanted to talk about that. Should she follow that lead? What would you have done? Her own plans for the morning seemed removed from the needs of any of the children. Analyze each situation. Would it have been possible to choose one of these situations and connect it with any of the others? How?

Could any of the situations have been dealt with more helpfully later on? Which one? Plan to help children meet successfully one of these situations.

1. Why would making cradles for the nursery class probably provide more religious outcomes than making the cradles just to keep?

2. In the light of this chapter, how much religious value is there in a child's coloring a cut-out? in making a bird house in order to win a prize?

CHAPTER VI

ACTIVITIES THAT PRIMARY CHILDREN MAY USE PURPOSEFULLY

Introductory Study

1. What activities are practical for use in your class?

2. Suppose a public school and a church school use the same activity, what essential differences in aim should be included when it is used by the church school?

3. Give at least two values of memory work. Avoid any reason that cites future values only.

Memorization

Principles to Follow. Memorization is another type of activity suitable for the Primary class and department. It is not to be regarded as a method unrelated to the regular teaching of the class. Only as much memory materials should be used as can become a necessary and helpful part of the class work and experience. The teacher remembers that memorization is helpful when it is a purposeful activity of the children.

The teacher should ask herself each time that she plans to teach memory materials whether they have any contribution to make to the children's developing religious life. We may be very sure that unless the material has some worth for the child when he learns it, he will find little future value in it. This does not mean, of course, that the children will be able to appreciate to the fullest the meaning of every memory

passage. It does mean that meaningless materials should not be taught with the idea that they will help the children later in life.

This use of memory material is wasteful of time also because the amount forgotten is very large when meaningless materials are used. While such material is being drilled upon, more important teachings which the church school should give to prevent unchristian ideas, feelings, or habits from developing are crowded out. Drilling upon meaningless memory verses is unnecessary because there is plenty of excellent material which Primary children can understand and use.

Too Much Memorization May Lead to a Shallow Religious Life. A memory verse is a summary in words of some event, experience, or desired conduct. Children can become glib reciters of Bible verses without any real feeling or thought. If the teachers are not careful, the children will never connect the passages with their own lives or learn to worship or to control conduct by them. "The teacher's habit of forcing upon young children a too early generalization in verbal form of their religious experience is responsible for much slipshod thinking and later reaction."[1]

Values. On the other hand, children should have a chance to memorize certain materials which have religious value. This is true, first, because the children get a certain pleasure out of the very activity. It gives them a sense of power and mastery.

To Use in Worship. Then memorized hymns, biblical passages, poems, and prayers may be used in worship. If the children are really to participate in the worship service, they must be familiar with much of the ma-

[1] Hetty Lee, *Present Day Problems in Religious Teaching.* Used by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

terial to be used or they will be unable to express what they feel. No one could be more uncomfortable than Primary children trying to sing a hymn which they know imperfectly. Often a class can make a beautiful contribution to the worship service of the department by singing a hymn or reciting a poem or Bible passage learned during the class session. The very element of variety which this practice adds to the service is an added stimulus to worship. The opportunity of giving pleasure to others is a valuable practice of the Christian attitude toward others. Then if the hymn is vitally related to what the class has been doing, singing the hymn for the department deepens the children's understanding of their learnings in class.

To Express Oneself Reverently and Beautifully. Second, memorization helps the child to express appreciation for some unusual event or scene on a high level. Three persons may stand and look at the Grand Canyon of Arizona; one may be utterly unable to express the wonder and awe welling up within his soul. Another may say crudely, "Ain't it pretty?" and the third may say reverently, "The earth is the Lord's." All three had the same sense of wonder, but, religiously, the man who could connect beautiful words with his deep feeling was brought closer to God as he viewed his handiwork. We want children to grow in this same way, so we teach them beautiful passages to connect with their experiences. For example, Psalm 122. 1 is connected with the children's experiences of working and worshiping at church. This is another form of worship.

To Use in Controlling Conduct. In the third place, children may memorize Bible passages, poems, or rhymes to use in controlling their own conduct. The verse then becomes a kind of slogan, a key to what right conduct

is. Sometimes it becomes not only a conduct control but also helps the child to be brave in a time of stress, giving comfort and establishing emotional poise. Children have reported that the last verse of John Martin's "God's Dark" has helped them to be brave. Others have said that "I am with thee and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest" has been a comfort in strange surroundings.

"Do you know that verse, 'He careth for you'?" asked Beverly. "Well, I was afraid to go upstairs, and I said it all the way up and then I wasn't afraid."

"Yesterday I was playing," Marjorie reported, "and mother wanted me to go to the store, and I remembered 'Do all things without murmurings' and went."

When we hear reports like these, we know the children have really learned the verses. Merely being able to repeat the verse is no real test of the child's knowledge of it. The superintendent of the department can weave conduct verses into the worship service and give added meaning and additional chances for recall.

The most unusual case of a verse controlling conduct under trying and unjust circumstances was reported by a mother. George was in the third grade. One Sunday the class had learned the verse, "Let us love one another." There had been a discussion of what this meant in terms of everyday situations. For one thing the class had decided that you did not fuss about whether other children at home got more good things to eat than you did. George went home and saw some apple pies on the kitchen table. He asked for a slice of pie and was refused. A little while afterward he came back into the kitchen to find Carol, a little brother, whom the mother foolishly spoiled, eating pie. George's face flushed and he began, "You gave him—" then

he clapped his hands over his mouth and said, "We've got to love one another," and went out of the kitchen.

Teaching Memory Material

Longer Passages Instead of Many Short Verses. Since memory material has value, how shall it be taught? First, it is connected naturally with the other class plans. It is used when it best fits into the class work. Usually the teacher connects the memory material with the entire teaching unit instead of choosing short, often fragmentary, verses to use in every class session. Memorizing a longer passage over a period of weeks may be planned for instead of teaching one verse every Sunday whether there is a real reason for using it or not. Arranging memory material under teaching units leaves children and teacher free to introduce it at the time when it will mean most to the religious nurture of the class.

Associative Memorization. Having the same memory material for several weeks gives opportunity to enrich the meaning of the passage by associating it with many experiences of the children. For example, when a third grade is learning the one hundredth psalm just before Thanksgiving, the children have chances to associate with the psalm all of the ways through which we show our thankfulness. Both the meaning of the psalm and the experiences are enriched by the association.

A group of children were learning to know trees—flowering trees, fruit trees, shade trees, and so on. They were collecting and pressing the leaves. They learned the verse, "Out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food,"[2] and connected it with their study of trees.

[2] Gen. 2. 9a.

The idea of God, the Creator, received new meaning for them.

Another Primary class is stimulated by the story of Jesus and Bartimæus to help a school for the blind. They learn the verse, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The verse has new meaning, for they know a new way of carrying out its command. The enterprise has added religious value, since it is connected with a teaching of Jesus. This is called associative memorizing and is far more valuable than mere repetitive memorizing. Some of the present courses of study provide for this use of memory material. They supply sufficient memory material for Primary children. Sometimes the amount seems limited because they allow plenty of time for the child to learn it meaningfully and religiously. They do not label each passage "memory verse," as this would tend to make its learning formal and would leave the class little freedom of choice in using it.

How Memorization May Be a Complete Act of Learning. The special method of teaching memory material is called drill. Drill may be used according to the laws of learning (see Chapter III) and by the lesson procedure discussed in Chapter IV. Suppose, at Christmas time, a second grade wants to make a contribution to the Christmas worship service. Early in the month the teacher calls attention to Luke 2. 8-14, which is printed on the pupil's folder for the Sunday. She explains that this passage is taken from the Bible and that it is the way the Bible tells the story of one event when Jesus was born. Then she reads the passage. Perhaps, one of the children will suggest that the class learn it to say, or the teacher may ask if they think this story from the Bible would be a good one to learn by heart

for the worship service. If the children think it would, the teacher has helped the class to take the first step in an act of learning-purposing. Readiness has been secured. They are ready to learn the passage.

The Whole Method Revised. Then follows practice with satisfaction. This corresponds to planning and executing plans. The teacher will use the "whole method revised." She gives the children an idea of the passage as a whole instead of teaching it line by line. When a line at a time is memorized, the meaning is sometimes disturbed and artificial connections must be set up between the lines.

The teacher is sure that the children understand all the unusual words, especially if the class is using the King James version or the American Standard version of the Bible. She notices any especially difficult passages and drills on these. If the selected memory material is divided into thought units like a psalm, she develops the thought of each unit. Sometimes she tells the story of the passage and how it came to be written.

Minor Laws. She suggests that each child ask mother to hear him say the passage several times during the week. This is to make use of the law of frequency, one of the minor laws of habit-forming. She uses pictures such as Copping's "Shepherds" or Plockhorst's "Annunciation to the Shepherds." The children learn to sing the "Angel's Song."[3] In this way the teacher secures attentive repetition and uses the law of vividness. The children are led to associate the passage with the Christmas activities, one of which may be sharing the Christmas stories with a school in another country.

The sense of satisfaction which the children have is

[3] *Song and Play for Children,* Danielson and Conant (No. 117).

increased by the department superintendent's appreciation when they recite the passage in the worship service. It is easy to judge how well children have succeeded when they are busy on so definite a piece of work. Their attitude is very important also.

"The 'atmosphere' under which memorizing is to take place, in which the words and phrases are to be introduced, must then be a *religious* atmosphere. The introduction of these words and phrases must arouse a desire to recall and use them, and any such recall and use must always be in the same *religious* atmosphere.

"But this religious atmosphere, to those who believe in Our Lord's Revelation of God, must be an atmosphere of Love; so, if our memorizing is to be 'religious,' it must be free from all force, dislike, drill, bribery, etc. This is saying a good deal. Our test question for any piece of memory work *as a means of religious teaching is:* 'Will it be done by the child without compulsion, dislike, drill, bribery? If so, it is right; if not, it is wrong.' "[4]

To summarize, the children should have a strong motive for learning any memory work. They should see some use for the necessary effort. The whole method revised is the best method of teaching it. Associative memorization should be used rather than mere repetitive memorizing. The passage should be connected with class purpose and plans or with other plans of the entire department. All difficult words should be explained. Special attention should be given to difficult passages. The children should have chances to use the material learned under as many different circumstances as possible.

[4] Hetty Lee, *Present Day Problems in Religious Teaching.* Used by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

Collections

Older Primary children are interested in collections, and this interest can be utilized with good effect. The suggestion of the missionary exhibits described under "Programs and Exhibits" is one method. Sometimes in nature lessons when the leader is trying to build up the thought of God as the force back of all life and to deepen the class's understanding of his goodness, the interest in collecting may be appealed to. Children enjoy collecting and mounting leaves, flowers, stones. They enjoy making collections of pictures to use in making scrapbooks and so on.

Collections of local treasures may be shared with children living in a different part of the country. A class living by the seashore sent a box of marine objects to an inland group. In it they included starfish, many kinds of shell, pressed ocean lettuce, seaweed. They also included original pictures of what they did at the beach and stories about their activities. A gift including the interesting nature objects of a mountain region was sent in return. This sharing of nature collections fosters real friendliness.

Primary children take pride in making fresh nature collections for the department and in keeping them in good condition.

Programs and Exhibits

Children like to arrange programs and exhibits for other groups. Two second-grade classes were learning of the contributions of Japan and China respectively. Each class planned an exhibit and a program for the department and worked on it during the five weeks the missionary enterprise was being developed. A little

was added each week. The program was a development of each class session. The children brought from home play materials and articles from these countries. They borrowed pictures from the city library. They arranged a program explaining each article. They told how they had planned to express friendliness toward children in these countries. After the final program each class acted as a committee to explain the articles in detail to the very interested children who crowded about the table. One program was given one Sunday, one the next.

Another group, a third grade, learned that a Mexican student was in the city and persuaded him to speak to the department. The program was delightful. The children dictated the letter inviting the student and told him just what they were trying to do—build up a friendly appreciation of Mexico and her people. One child introduced him after consultation with the teacher.

An excellent report of a program for parents arranged by Primary children will be found in the first grade, Primary Course, by Mildred J. McArdle, published by the Christian Board of Publication.

Construction Activities

Paper and Cardboard. Paper and cardboard may be used by Primary children in many ways. They may be used for mounting original drawings or pictures, for poster work, for charts. Large unprinted sheets of newspaper 36 by 24 inches may be decorated by the children and used as backgrounds for plays. Scrapbooks may be made from paper and very attractive covers added. Many lovely small books may be made from the colored linings of envelopes. Greeting cards at Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter are made. Old

greeting cards furnish beautiful material with which to work, and should be kept. Often the children cut out the decoration or picture and use it in an original setting of their own. The teacher should plan to save all sorts of materials and encourage the children to do so.

Scrapbooks. Making scrapbooks is so familiar to most Primary teachers that there is little need to do more than mention this type of activity. Class record books may be kept. Scrapbooks may be made to illustrate hymns or to assemble health pictures or to develop some other theme. One Primary group enjoyed sending a series of scrapbooks to Korea to be used there in geography work by a Primary teacher who had asked for them.

Two forms of scrapbooks are planned. One is the pamphlet book. Here the page is double in width and is folded down the center. Holes are punched and the book is sewed along the seam. The exact number of pages must be chosen in advance. The other is the Japanese book. Here the sheets are separate and are sewed or bound together, after the book is completed. Children should be encouraged to work neatly and not to waste material. A boy was doing hasty sloven work. He asked for a new piece of paper, casting the used piece aside.

"Do you really need a new piece?" he was asked.

He thought a moment. "No, I don't," he said, and found a way to use the first sheet.

Many teachers in the past have used the sixteen square fold for making articles. Its use is being rapidly abandoned, however. The articles are so flimsy and are of little value.

Dolls. Making dolls is fascinating both to Primary

boys and girls. Once the Primary children in a rural church school were caring for a child attending a mountain school. The teacher told stories and discussed reasons why the mountain people needed help. One story was "Jemima Corncob."[5]

The children were interested in the corncob doll, and decided to make some. Any child who wished to make a doll was told to bring a corncob next Sunday. The teacher brought pink gingham to be tied to the cob for a skirt, gray flannelette to be used as shawls, white squares for faces (marked) and for bonnets. She was wondering what the boys would like to do while the girls made the dolls. There was no reason for her anxiety. Every boy brought a corncob!

Children should be encouraged to bring their dolls and to share them in play with other children just as the children should be encouraged to bring other toys especially to parties and to week-day sessions. There was a time when all toys must be left with the Primary secretary. Now a birthday gift is welcomed and enjoyed. Often the child's happiness in a doll is mentioned in the birthday prayer. So life and its real joys become more fully realized as gifts of a loving heavenly Father. Special dolls and Christmas dolls are also welcomed. The children seem to enjoy sharing their treasures.

Toys. The children like to make toys. Jumping jacks, or rabbits, or clowns are produced with great industry. Equipment used in games of other countries may be constructed also.

The children like to put old toys into condition so that they may be used as gifts. Sandpapering and varnishing lend delightful experiences. The children

[5] Elizabeth Colson, *Little Neighbor Picture Stories.*

should be expected to work neatly and carefully and always to clean up any trash that remains. This is true of all work.

Any work requiring painting or pasting on a large scale should be done on tables spread with old newspapers, and the children should wear simple paper aprons.

Aprons. The children may make or bring aprons. Sometimes the child may make an apron to take home in order to be ready to help there. The aprons may be decorated with original designs done in crayon. Aprons for permanent use may be made of oilcloth. They make nice presents for the beginners or for the other new children who enter the department.

Doll Houses. Doll houses can be made by nailing two orange crates together. The crates should be the closed variety, not the kind with slats or strips for sides. The inside may be papered. Sample books of wall paper or short ends can be obtained from a paper hanger. If possible, the children should choose the paper. The outside of the crate should be sandpapered and painted. Small pieces of linoleum make floor coverings. Then the doll house may be furnished.

A doll house helps develop a good co-operative enterprise in a vacation school. Many stories of working together, such as "Nehemiah Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem," "Isaac Refuses to Quarrel," "Lot Is Given First Choice," and "How the Home was Built,"[6] may be used. Worship materials stressing co-operativeness and the joys of the home may be woven around the plan. An interesting unit of this type is developed by Mrs. Bonser.[7] If the house is made to give to some group,

[6] Maud Lindsay, *Mother Stories.*
[7] Edna M. Bonser, *Child Life and Religious Growth.*

a stronger religious value is present. Doll houses are made from large cardboard boxes also, and smaller boxes may be used to make individual houses.

Cooking. Primary children love to cook, and there is no reason why they should not have large responsibility for their parties. They may also prepare gift boxes of cookies or simple sweets at Christmas or for May baskets. In a vacation school the second and third grades were asked to prepare the refreshments for a party. Their plans were both elaborate and indigestible. The teacher helped them judge these plans. They finally decided on simple refreshments. Stuffed dates, oatmeal cookies, and lemonade were chosen. The dates were made early in the week and stored in tin boxes, the cookies later, and the lemonade on the day of the party. Another second grade slipped away to the church kitchen on the Sunday morning before Thanksgiving and made a box of stuffed dates for the children for whom the Thanksgiving basket was planned. It was a joyous service that they rendered.

Children may serve a simple lunch of cookies and milk or cocoa. When there are expanded Sunday or week-day sessions, the children get hungry and restless unless there is a simple lunch. Cooking often leads to opportunities to discuss diet in relation to health and to give a Christian interpretation to it. The church should not teach health, but it surely should teach that the body is the temple of the living God. It should teach God's care and how a child may help God to care for himself. This is the basis of temperance education. In cooking, the eating habits of children will naturally arise for discussion. Temperance and self-control teachings may be bound up for a child with his eating practices—whether he eats too much candy or is given

coffee to drink. Children learn to use church equipment properly when cooking and to show consideration for others by their neatness and care. This may be a natural step into reverence for the church, for a child cannot learn to love and respect a place unless he has had many happy experiences there, and certainly not while he is abusing it. Practice in asking a blessing is naturally connected with a lunch. Foods may be traced back to the heavenly Father also.

Sometimes in missionary enterprises a teacher will serve some well-liked product from the country being studied. A second grade thoroughly enjoyed cocoanut wafers when they were engaged in a Philippine enterprise.

Blue Prints. Blue prints or Van Dyke paper prints may be used in making sun photographs of delicate pressed grasses, ferns, and weeds. Van Dyke paper is more expensive but the results are lovelier. The children learn thus to appreciate in new ways the wonders of the sunlight and water. They observe more closely the beauties of the outdoors as they collect and press their specimens. They have a chance to express themselves creatively in the arrangement of their pictures. The paper is carefully protected from all light until the time for its use. It is cut the proper size for the picture and then the paper is placed on a piece of cardboard which is used as a support, the sensitized side turned up and the pressed grasses and flowers arranged upon it, quickly. The glass is then held firmly over the entire surface. A glass window pane or a glass from an old picture may be used. Direct sunlight is brought to bear upon the glass and paper. When the blue print turns quite gray and Van Dyke very brown, wash thoroughly until the water is perfectly clear of sediment. Adding

a teaspoonful of hydrogen peroxide to the water helps to insure a more perfect picture. Then dry between blotters. A very lovely photograph results. This may be mounted in a book fold and become a present or may be used for other purposes.

Cabinets. Children, especially the older boys, may enjoy making cabinets for the classes out of orange crates. Two crates are nailed together, sandpapered, painted or stained, and a curtain is hung across the front. Toy cabinets are made in the same way.

Building. With the large Patty Hill or Hennessy blocks the children can build large units which they can use themselves. One third grade made and furnished a Japanese house. They even added the sliding paper walls.

The children enjoy making tables and chairs large enough for them to use. A Primary group at a summer resort made a very serviceable table for their room.

Clay. Clay is a medium well liked by Primary children. Its use is much more appropriate to the vacation, the week-day, and the expanded session than to the regular church school. Pots for flowers at Easter, jars or vases for the department, articles for table or floor activities, dishes and flower pots for a doll house, and many articles used in other lands, such as Mexican or Indian pottery, can be modeled.

Sewing. Primary children do simple sewing and with large needles. Small work is avoided, as it calls for too great maturity in muscular connections. The children overcast dolls, make very simple doll clothes, hem curtains for the movie or the cabinets, and overcast tarlatan stockings for Christmas trees. They use yarn or coarse thread. There is no sex difference before the third grade unless the children have

been badly spoiled and rendered self-conscious. Just as girls like to hammer and paint, boys like to sew, even making doll clothes for missionary dolls.

Table and Floor Activities

A Primary class built the town where Jesus lived. The houses were made of gray cardboard. They were made like stone by adding glue and sand to the surface. Many objects found in ancient Jewish homes were modeled in clay—water jars, oven, meal mortar, sheepfold. The children were not given exact patterns from which to work, but were able to consult many books of pictures. Old copies of the National Geographic Magazine proved helpful for this purpose.

Missionary villages may be set up and clothespin dolls added. Building a Filipino or a Chinese village adds to the children's understanding of life in these lands, its charm and its needs. By no means should already manufactured cutout villages be used, as they are too completely prepared to require any real hunt for knowledge on the part of the children.

Caring for the Room and the Church

The children will never learn to accept their proper responsibility for the church unless the work of the Primary room is done largely by them. In some departments and classes a list is posted each month telling what each group is to do. The groups which are having an especial teaching unit on the work of the church carry the heaviest responsibilities.

When new equipment is needed, the children as well as the teachers should face the problem. Then the room is truly theirs. Their efforts should not be confined to their own room, however. Whenever a building pro-

gram is in progress, the children should be asked to participate.

Gardening

Primary children love to garden, and they come into contact with forces of nature as they do. Out of these contacts grows a sense of God's presence and of their working with him to care for the world. Many Primary Departments cannot arrange out-of-door gardens, but any department can have indoor gardens even though they be of the simplest type. A window box or a fernery may be placed by a sunny window. Narcissus may be grown in water and rocks. If narcissus are grown, only the best bulbs should be bought because otherwise the flowering is too uncertain, since the importation of bulbs has been prohibited. The children enjoy growing the delicate trailing vines of sweet potatoes in jars of water. These must be kept in the dark until they sprout.

One winter a second grade made greeneries as a valentine surprise for their mothers. In a low dish they put a small piece of wet sponge and planted flax seed in the pores. On Valentine Day the sponge was a delicate green ball. This was an excellent activity at a time when these children were trying to help God to make happy homes.

Pots of trailing ivy or bowls of Wandering Jew make lovely touches of green during the winter months. In passing, it may be suggested that in the writer's judgment artificial flowers should be debarred from a place where young children are.

If the children are in a suburban church in or near a metropolis and have a garden, boxes may be sent into the congested districts. The children may send them to the sick or shut-ins. They may use them in their own

room or for the church service. The care of gardens and problems about respecting other people's gardens and lawns will be approached very naturally. The worship experiences will be valuable if the teacher knows how to take advantage of the teaching opportunities that arise.

The Proper Use of Patterns

Patterns have a legitimate place when a child is interested in the finished product and cannot possibly practice what he wants without help. In making a doll or a jumping rabbit a child may ask for a pattern. He should be given one. When planning a border for the room and using colored cut paper to develop it, the child may ask for patterns. The writer has seen children run out and get autumn leaves to use as patterns for such a border. A child cutting a sock for a Christmas tree may need a pattern. There is no teaching value in allowing him to express what he does not yet know, that is, how to cut according to line in order to get definite results. However, a child should not be expected to follow patterns in making things where original work may be done. Poster making, painting, or drawing, and so on, should be free work and the child should not be bound by another's ideas.

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For Study

1. Review the memory work for at least one quarter of the course of study which you are using. Note what is provided and what experiences give it meaning. Study the suggestions for its further use in worship. What effect on the learning of the memory passage does omission of activities and worship have?

CHAPTER VII

USING THE STORY TO STIMULATE AND GUIDE PURPOSEFUL CHRISTIAN LIVING

Introductory Study

1. Recall from your own teaching experience incidents which show the value of stories in guiding the Christian living of children.

2. Examine at least one group of materials in your teacher's text. For what teaching purposes are stories suggested?

Testing the Value of Story-Telling

Many teachers will feel as Alice in Wonderland did when she exclaimed, "Things are curiouser and curiouser," if they are told that teachers are questioning the religious value of the time-honored method-story telling. One is asked, "Is there any need for training church-school teachers to be good story-tellers?" If this last question is to be answered "Yes," then the Primary teacher must discover what, according to present methods, the story may contribute to the child's uninterrupted growth in Christian attitude, appreciation, purpose, or skill.

Why Story-Telling Is Questioned. There was a time when all other methods except drill were practically set aside for the story. When teaching was regarded as "imparting knowledge," then the story was the major part of almost every Primary "lesson." This was

true largely because it seemed so easy to "impart knowledge" and "hold attention" by this method. The part before the story prepared for it; the part following helped the child to "express its truth." Recalling the story in a hope of fixing its details in the child's mind was one of the teacher's important tasks. The teacher thought that if she could tell the "lesson story," she was quite prepared for Sunday morning.

So the teaching plan was a fixed one and the teacher made little attempt to understand or to meet the children's religious needs except in a very indirect way through a more or less suitable story.

Place of Story at Present. When class sessions are planned to help children form worthy Christian purposes and attitudes, think through religious questions, carry out their plans, and afterward judge what they have done, we realize that the place of the story will be a very different one. The child's growth, not the story, is now the center of the lesson. The place in a class session at which a story will be used will depend on where it can best contribute to the Christian experience of the class. Whether the story will be used at all will depend upon whether it furnishes the best material and method for contribution to the class experience.

Some New Uses of the Story

Let us visit imaginatively some Primary classes and see how the story may be used to guide children into Christian attitude, thinking, and activity.

Using the Story to Solve a Class Problem in Christian Ways. Here is a Primary class that is trying to decide what to give at Christmas. The children have decided to plan a Christmas tree for the near-by day nursery.

But what gifts shall accompany it? The children offer torn books and broken toys. Without comment, the teacher begins to tell a story, a story of a little child in a day nursery who dreamed for many days of a beautiful Christmas doll; of some children who were preparing a box for the day nursery; of how they sent very nice presents "because the children there are like us"; and of how happy the little girl was when she got her dream doll.

Then the leader talks with the children about the presents they like. Again the group discusses what to give. There is a noticeable change. The children have caught the point of view of the children at the day nursery. Through the story they have entered sympathetically into the experience of another group. There is a change in attitude and a growth in their desire to give generously. They are developing new standards of generosity because they have been given an example to imitate. This story has not only stated their problem indirectly, but it has also aroused a desire to act in a more Christian way.

On the following Sunday the teacher, knowing that few lessons are learned without repetition and renewed desire, tells the story "A Present for Jesus," by Elsie Ball.[1] This story tells of three children who decided to give a Christmas gift to a little girl, since this is the best way of giving a present to Jesus on his birthday. On still another Sunday she uses the story of the Wise Men, stressing that the gifts which they brought to Jesus were the best that they could bring. There is a moment of class worship when the children pray that their gifts will make Christmas joyful for their friends. For what purposes did this teacher use stories? First,

[1] The Elementary Magazine, December, 1928.

to help the class to see what was involved in giving toys; second, to help the children to understand the point of view of other children, to establish a sympathetic understanding of needs; third, through story and conversation to guide the growing purposes of the children; fourth, through the last two stories to lend worshipful meaning to the Christmas activity. The stories were a necessary and natural part of each class session.

To Introduce Problems and to Arouse Desired Attitudes and Purposes. We find the teacher of another class introducing a problem through the use of a story. The children have been abusing the Primary room. The children are unconscious of their problem. Because of this story we find certain changed motives developing. The children decide to help care for the room. They discuss the conduct of the children in the story as to its good and bad examples. In this case the teacher has helped the children to realize their problem—abuse of the church—and to find better ways of acting there.

To Guide Sympathetic Friendliness Toward Other Races and Classes. In another class we find the children eager to express friendliness toward Indian children in New Mexico. What can they do? The teacher in vivid narrative tells what she has learned about these children's needs from a visiting missionary. In the light of this story the class makes its own plans.

Let us visit a large church in an industrial city. We find the Primary workers troubled by the callous attitude of the children of mine owners and executives toward the children of operatives. An appeal is made, setting forth the need of the latter group, and the response is: "Why don't their daddies work like ours do? Then they would have plenty to eat and plenty of

clothes to wear." This statement is probably a reflection of what the children hear at home. These Primary workers find that their best method is to use stories: first, because they most easily overcome an attitude of indifference or hostility; second, because many facts regarding social justice can be put into the story which cannot be stated for little children in any other way; third, because through stories the Christian way of looking at relations between the poor and the privileged classes and the value which Christianity places upon human life can be made vivid even to little children. In passing, we may note that Jesus used the story to drive his message home to persons whose attitudes were indifferent or hostile. Fourth, the teachers avoid any direct criticism of parental judgment.

Many missionary stories can be used to bring about sympathetic understanding and friendliness because of the power which a story has to awaken an emotional response.

In a world which needs desperately to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood among all classes and races of society, the broadening of social contacts and helping to give Christian meaning to these experiences is one of the important tasks of the teacher of religion.

To Meet Special Situations. In another group we find a story used to help the children solve the problem of how to behave toward a strange child who has recently entered the class. Not only is the desired conduct shown in the story but the desired ways of feeling are awakened. The members of the class feel more friendly toward each other and toward the strange child. They are more able to work in a group. The teacher has approached the problem tactfully.

To Interpret Nature Religiously and to Talk About

a Happy Experience. We visit another Primary class. A child has found a chrysalis, a beautiful jade-green object dotted with tiny specks of gold. "What is it?" the children ask as they close around the teacher. She weaves into a story the life history of the monarch butterfly, a story that brings God in as the force back of life and its processes and leaves the group big-eyed with reverence. In this way she gives information and talks to the children reverently about a vivid new experience. Often children will need information if they are to go on with their plans and think out their problems. The story is an interesting way of giving it.

To Enrich the Fellowship Between Teacher and Child —To Give Joy. When religious teaching becomes a process of apprenticeship in Christian living, opportunity for contact with the personality of the teacher is the richest gift which the adult has to share with the child. He learns religion from his teacher through his fellowship with her, catching her point of view, watching her meet situations, learning to be religious by meeting some of the problems of life in the company of a more mature Christian person. When this is true, Primary teachers must be interesting to their children. They must be persons whom the children enjoy and naturally seek. Unless they are, the children are not likely to choose to meet life as the teacher does, regardless of how fine a person she may be. Recently a Primary class was asked what it would like most to do. "Let's go for a walk," the children answered, "and see that mother robin [a robin on a nest which they had been watching for weeks], and let's come back and you tell us stories." This incident indicates that there is a very definite place in the work of the church for the fellowship which grows out of enjoyable cultural expe-

riences shared with one another, whether these experiences be actual ones like going for a walk and watching a mother robin or fellowships developed through enjoying stories. In the early part of the Sunday-morning session the resourceful teachers will find opportunities for genuine fellowship with the class: reliving experiences, talking about happy events of the week, giving information which makes some experience clearer, sharing Christian ways of regarding problems through stories and incidents told by both teacher and children. Utilizing this period of time is of great importance.

There is a third-grade teacher who makes it a practice to be at her table every Sunday a half hour before the session begins. Her class is usually present long before the session opens. The little intimate fellowship of that class has had an interesting effect on the children.

There is a real place for the use of the story for sharing joy. For this reason nonsense stories, of which, for example, The White Bear[2] is one, prove valuable in moments of relaxation in the Vacation Church School or the week-day school.

To Make a Religious Principle Real. In still another class we find a teacher of a first grade trying to make the religious principle "in honor preferring one another" real to her class through a story. The children have been snatching crayons, paper, and scissors. We find her telling "Abraham Gives Lot First Choice," and after the story we are interested to see Edward push the box of crayons to Joe before choosing his own.

A Story Meets More Than One Purpose. Of course children do not learn one thing at a time, so we may expect a story to meet several needs simultaneously.

[2] Maud Lindsay's "The Story-teller."

Stories Which Children Create

To Relive or to Enrich Interesting Experiences. Another method of using stories is to encourage the children to create stories. A Primary class may go for a walk and on returning make up stories about what was seen. When the children carry some bit of work or some gift to a home for children, they may make a story about the experience.

The children are encouraged also to tell stories about their daily experiences. This proves a good method of giving practice in accuracy of reporting.

To Contribute to the Worship Service. The classes may come back from walks and tell the leader about what has happened and what they have seen. On a frosty winter morning the branches of the trees and the massing of shrubs made a fairyland of out-of-doors. A third grade went quietly for a walk and on return told the entire department about these wonders. One of the girls told a charming story of a child who had never seen frost before and how beautiful she thought it was. A genuine experience of worship followed as the leader read from her Bible "He scattereth the hoar frost like ashes" (Psalm 147. 16), and the group looked out of a window and sang "Winter Day."[3]

Incomplete Stories. Again a teacher will begin to tell a story and let the children complete it. There is a touch of playfulness about the plan that never fails to make a humorous appeal. Sometimes the group contrasts stories or the ending of stories to decide which is the better way of acting or feeling. So the teachers seek to build up standards in Christian feeling and conduct on an increasingly higher level.

[3] *Songs for Little People*—Danielson and Conant.

Recall of Stories

The children find real joy in retelling well-liked stories, especially if there is a reason for the retelling. Sometimes several children will retell one together. At other times the class will choose one child to retell the story. Dramatization is another form of recall. This method has been discussed in Chapter V.

Sharing Stories With Other Groups. Children will recall stories in order to share them. Often at Christmas, the older Primary children will recall the familiar Advent stories in order to have them well in mind when making Christmas books for a mission school. Not only is there social value in this practice but often it leads to worship. Then, too, teachers have an opportunity to find out just what misconceptions of words or meanings exist among the children, misconceptions which easily arise and hinder the child's future development.

Connecting Familiar Bible Stories With Christian Activities. Story recall is important for another reason. Connecting a story, especially one about Jesus, with many different forms of Christian service or with a number of worship experiences enriches a child's understanding of the Bible story and gives religious meaning to each activity. There is no reason why the same story should not be used with a number of plans.

A Primary class taught this fact to the teacher. The class was working one day on a gift for a Crippled Children's Home. "Jesus would have helped them too," said Joe. "Don't you remember that story about the man who couldn't walk?" She retold to the satisfaction of the entire class the story of the paralytic. The story had been used months before with a problem of

caring for hurt playmates. The children themselves had made the additional connection between the Bible story and helpfulness to-day.

Recalling Stories Heard Outside the Church School. Children recall for the pleasure of the group stories read or heard at public school or at home. A charming example occurred when a class was working on a Chinese project. One child recalled a Chinese story more delightful than any that the teacher had told.

The Teacher's Problems in the Newer Uses of Story-Telling

When to Use a Story. In using the story effectively with Primaries, the teacher must think through certain problems. She learns when to use a story. There are some class sessions when the use of a story would be a waste of time. It would hinder and interrupt what the class is doing or thinking. The teacher must not let herself be bound by her former habit of using a story every Sunday. She can teach herself to use it only when it makes a contribution.

Using Stories With a Definite Rather Than a General Teaching Purpose. The teacher learns to use those stories which have a direct connection with some part of a conduct problem, rather than stories which treat of virtues in general. Primary teachers are building up not only right ways of feeling and the desire to do right, but also they are furnishing information regarding what desirable Christian ways of acting under certain conditions are. The wise teacher avoids the use of stories which are so far removed from the actual daily life of her class that no child can see the connection between the conduct problem and the story.

Often Bible stories have failed to have the desired re-

sults for just this reason. When a teacher tells the story of the good Samaritan—which is rather far removed from the life of a Primary child—she must connect with it some modern life stories which show ways in which a child may be a good Samaritan to-day. Hastening on to another Bible story does an injustice to the first, for its worth has not yet been fully made available for the child. The teacher plans to connect actual practice in being good Samaritans with the Bible story, the modern life stories and the discussion of them, or her teaching becomes mere talking.

Choosing Stories With a Purpose. Teachers regard stories as tools with which they work. Many teachers have told stories in the past as a form of entertainment or because they had a vague idea that there was some special virtue in a story, the Bible story especially, which operated on all occasions. They have never tried to find out why the story was of value. The teacher should study every story which she expects to tell to find out for herself how it will help the class religiously, to know how it fits in with the purpose of the class session, to see its connection with the class's practice of Christian ways of behaving.

It is needless to say that each teacher must have a very intimate knowledge of her class's needs if she is going to select stories for them that will be of any real value in guiding their growing religious life.

Learning to Find, Adapt, and Create Stories. The teacher must learn to choose stories which will help her to meet the purposes of story-telling as set forth above. She must also learn to create stories to meet special needs of her own group when there are no suitable stories available. Many teachers when they are first told that they can and should create stories, will declare

that this is an impossible task. Others will reply that since there are so many good stories they should not create mediocre ones. There may be some stories which should be told to every child, yet there are many more religious stories needed to-day to make real to children those fundamental principles of Christianity which are not told in Bible narrative but are found in other form, as statements or discourses. These principles must be made real for children through modern life stories so that the story of life to-day may help to make the Bible better understood.

Learning to Create Stories. There are few people who have not some creative ability. How can a teacher learn to adapt or create stories for her purposes? Perhaps the helps on story-telling technique to be found in the following chapter will be of value.

Studying Standard Volumes on Story-Telling. Standard volumes on story-telling technique will be valuable also. Esenwein and Stockard, in *Children's Stories and How to Tell Them,* have a very helpful section on the adaptation of stories. Bryant, *How to Tell Stories to Children,* is valuable for its suggestions on story adaptation. In Eggleston, *The Use of the Story in Religious Education,* there is an interesting account of how a class was stirred to creative effort through certain suggestive phrases which made the members see pictures.

Watch for Good Stories and Lists of Stories. Watching for bibliographies of stories which appear from time to time in magazines on religious education of children, such as The Pilgrim Elementary Teacher and The Elementary Magazine, will keep the teacher in touch with what is available. There are also stories published in these magazines which should be judged for teaching value and filed for future use.

Using Stories As Literature and Reference Material

Story-telling is not the only way of using stories with young children. Primary teachers are learning increasingly to use them in other ways. There are ways which stimulate the child to find out things for himself as story-telling does not. Let us see, then, what are some of the additional ways of using stories with children.

Reading to Children. A second-grade teacher was helping her children to illustrate the song, "God's Children Live in Many Lands." As the children learned about God's children in many lands interesting and worth-while world friendship activities were carried on by the group. The teacher found that *Boys and Girls and Friendly Beasts,* by Mary Entwistle, was appreciated by the children and gave them many vivid pictures of children in other lands. She let the children choose whether she would read or tell the stories and the class unanimously asked for the reading of the stories.

A third-grade teacher was telling a story of Jesus' helpfulness. Margaret interrupted: "You needn't tell me that anybody ever lived as good as Jesus. I think you are just making it up." Some other children in the class agreed with her. After a consultation with the superintendent, the teacher decided that Margaret's statement reflected an important problem of the children, since it showed a lack of knowledge of the historical Jesus and a sense of his reality. She decided to follow this problem. She began by asking the children who did believe that Jesus really lived where they thought he lived when he was on earth. The entire class

thought that he must have lived in America. One child ventured the statement that maybe he lived in New York. The teacher began by using a large globe and tracing the route to Palestine upon it. She did not think for a moment that the third-grade children really understood the geographical location. She knew, however, that the children would connect any place on a globe with the real world since they had seen the globe used by the older classes at school. She knew that younger children are always interested in the equipment in class rooms of the older children. She showed pictures of scenes in Palestine. Some of the pictures showed Oriental boys and led to questions about Jesus' boyhood. The teacher explained that we know little about Jesus' boyhood, but we do know how boys lived in Palestine at the time of Jesus. Probably he had very much the same kind of boyhood as the other boys. The children asked for stories about the boyhood of Jesus, and the teacher, after consultation with the superintendent, began to read certain passages from Oxenham, *The Hidden Years,* and Boulting, *The Beautiful Childhood.* Later the superintendent of the department gave the third grade an opportunity to tell the rest of the department what they had learned about the little country in which Jesus lived when he was here on earth. She encouraged them to show the Palestinian village which they had made. The literary beauty of the two books used depicted beautifully the childhood of Jesus. They were appreciated by the children and met the situation as more mediocre stories told to the children could not. The use of a book with older Primary children has its own value also.

Other Primary teachers have found that their classes enjoy hearing a story read to the group which some

child finds in a story paper, magazine, or at the library, and which is related to the work of the class. They encourage the children to hunt for such materials and bring them to class.

The Browsing Table. Some Primary departments have a table known as the browsing table. Upon it are placed magazines, storybooks, and pictures which are related to the work going on in the department at the time. Teachers in departments which do not have a browsing table often bring storybooks to church school and let the children enjoy them during the first informal time. Sometimes they suggest that the children ask questions about the pictures or stories that they find in these books. Sometimes a child will bring a book to the teacher and ask her to read to him and the entire group will become interested. In the expanded session, vacation school or midweek sessions where greater freedom may be allowed, the children select storybooks and enjoy having a quiet time for reading. If the books have been wisely selected, this plan often leads into interesting discussions and purposeful activities.

One second-grade teacher used this method in a church school which had only a brief session to stimulate and continue interest in a plan for showing friendliness toward a Japanese kindergarten. Probably in the future there will be a very real demand for stories and narrative material which Primary children can use themselves in solving their problems and in carrying out their plans. A number of books of this type have already been developed for use in public schools, some of them having real value for church-school workers also.

Primary Library. One Sunday Richard, Joe, and

Edward came to the superintendent. "We have an idea," they said. "Why don't you start a library? We certainly would like to get books to read."

The superintendent encouraged their suggestion, and out of it is growing slowly a library from which the children can secure books to read at home and also books to use at church school when they need additional information in order to carry out some plan. The teachers frequently refer the children to the library when some question arises on which they need help. Back numbers of the Nature Magazine and the National Geographic Magazine are preserved and form splendid reference material.

Books Borrowed From Public Libraries. A second-grade teacher in helping the children to experience friendliness toward some Chinese children found that a visit to a public library was stimulating. The children asked the librarian to lend them some of the books in order that they might show the pictures in them during a Chinese exhibit which they were working out for the entire department. The plan proved a highly successful one. Primary children know how to use stories and other literature in this way because of their public-school experience.

To Summarize

We may say that the story has value in the religious education of Primary children when it helps them to purpose on a Christian level; when it helps them to carry out their plans successfully or to solve their problems according to the teachings of Jesus. It is also valuable when it helps the boys and girls to find fellowship with God through worship; when it brings about an attitude that is more Christian toward the persons

or problems involved in some situation which they are facing; when it helps them to feel and act in Christian ways toward an ever-increasing group of world brothers. Teachers need to prepare themselves to use stories thus to interpret and to guide life.

Bibliography

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Bryant—*How to Tell Stories to Children*, Chapter III.
St. John—*Stories and Story Telling*, Chapter XII.
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Questions

1. Did you use a story last Sunday? Why? Was your reason a good one when judged in the light of this chapter?

2. Read Luke 10. 25-37. See if you can determine, in the light of this chapter, Jesus' purpose in telling this story. Why was this good method? Contrast the teaching method revealed in this Bible reference with the teaching procedure discussed in Chapter IV.

3. How do the new ways of using stories differ from the former uses?

For Further Study

1. Find an article of religious value in a newspaper and develop it into a story for Primary children. Think of the kind of class session in which the story would be a contribution; or,

2. Take these phrases and make a story:

"A bathing beach with bright sun parasols,"

"A little boy and his mother on the sand,"

or,

3. Find or write a story to meet one of the following problems:

a. A new child in the department who is afraid of strangers.

b. A child who takes other children's playthings and keeps them.

c. Some boys who will not permit a new boy to enter the class because "their gang" does not like him.

d. A class that wants to keep everything that it makes for its own enjoyment.

4. Take a certain virtue, perhaps honesty. List every phase of this virtue which Primary children can practice. Find stories to help the children to learn to practice each phase.

5. Select twenty-five books for a Primary library, keeping in mind the most important religious activities for Primary children and seeking to choose books that will be good reference materials to use with them.

What Would You Do?

1. A Primary teacher was nonplussed one Sunday when her class said in chorus, "We heard that story about Lincoln at public school." What would you do, continue to tell the story, or have the class retell it, or use another? How could you use the situation to lend religious meaning to public-school teaching?

2. A second grade was discussing helpfulness at home. Jean alone was plainly bored. "Stop that talk and tell us a story," she said. Explain how you would meet this teaching situation.

CHAPTER VIII

LEARNING TO TELL STORIES

Introductory Study

1. Read the fifteenth chapter of Luke. Change the direct discourse in this story into indirect discourse. What happens to the effect of the story? How do you account for this change?

2. Read these two sentences: "The girl made chocolate fudge." "The girl made some chocolate fudge, so rich and creamy that it melted in your mouth." Is there any difference in the effect of the two sentences? Wherein does the difference lie?

3. Read the story, "The Three Pigs." What is the problem of this story? Where is it stated? How is it developed?

4. Read Luke 10. 30-37. How is the truth which Jesus wishes this story to convey to his hearers developed?

5. Ask the children in your Primary Department what stories they like best. Note any differences in story interests between the grades. List their responses by headings such as animal stories, fairy tales, stories of child life, poetry, informational stories, historical stories. Ask the nearest children's librarian what books are most popular with the children under nine years of age. List under the same headings as in the test given in your own group. Compare the two.

The Stories Primary Children Like

Sincerity and Emotional Appeal. A child wants

from a story just what any adult would ask; that is, he wishes a picture of life that has power to stir his emotions and guide him into action because it is true to the life which it seeks to describe. He wants it clothed in beauty of imagery and of language. Perhaps this is why so many of the so-called classics for children were written by masters and not intended for children at all. De Foe did not have children in mind when he wrote "Robinson Crusoe." Yet what child has not lived richly in its pages?

Action. A good story for Primary children has plenty of action. It moves. It does not limp along with many explanations and long, involved beginnings. Something has happened; some life problem has been solved, some conflict won, and the account is all worthy of record. Many a child has been antagonized, especially by Bible stories, because his teachers did not make the stories have plenty of action. Too many explanations were introduced and the child was lost among unimportant words. Nothing was happening of any importance, so why heed?

Unity. Any good story is unified. It does not ramble through many unimportant details so often confusing and tedious to the hearer, but it is unified around some problem. It goes onward with rising action and increasing feeling to its climax. This is especially important in a child's story, since the child cannot follow a number of details without becoming confused.

Vividness and Sensitiveness. A good Primary story makes the children see pictures. So fresh is its appeal that the children smell the flowers that bloom by the roadside, they listen to the caroling of the birds in the trees bordering the road, or they pant and press forward over its gray stones, lifted out of themselves and

into another world. Vividness is a matter of an exact use of carefully chosen words and of a sense of reality on the part of the story-teller. She really sees what is happening.

Imaginative sensitiveness contributes to vividness. The teacher sees the hidden meanings of ordinary events, the spiritual yearnings of ordinary people. She has an acute sense of the color, the aroma, the drama of ordinary life. Then she seeks to show to her class pictures of life, often their own life plus her keen sense of its spiritual values. She adds religious meaning to daily life. Teachers can cultivate within themselves this quality of imaginative sensitiveness. What a treasure for their spiritual life and that of their children they will find it! It will unconsciously affect every part of their teaching, not just their telling of stories, since it means an enrichment of personality and deeper spiritual insight.

Accuracy. A good Primary story is accurate in its description of life under varying conditions. Reading or hearing the description, we have a comfortable feeling that we have seen this place; we know just where this story might happen. Especially is it true that Primary teachers need to make their stories of children of other lands faithful to the life in those lands, not dwelling on some peculiarity which may be common only to a small group in the country where the scene is laid.

The Familiar Story. It is a mistake to think that Primary children do not like to hear the same story told many times. While the love of repetition is not so great as in the kindergarten age, a story which is associated by the boys and girls with meaningful experiences may be desired again and again. A Primary group

worked hard to help the teachers and mothers with a bake sale. They purchased with some of the money a beautiful colored print of Clementz, "Jesus and the Children." The story, "Christ Blessing Children," was told on the Sunday when the picture was hung in place. Several Sundays afterward, the leader referred to the picture but was puzzled to see that the group seemed to have no knowledge of the story; so she told it once more. A few Sundays later the same thing happened. Then she realized by the quiet and comfortable relaxation of the group during the story that they were quietly circumventing the stupidity of an adult and securing the telling of a story which they knew intimately and loved so greatly that they wished to hear it retold, and in as artistic a manner as possible.

A Primary teacher had the same thing happen in a class of second-grade children who knew the story of "The Good Shepherd" so well that the change of a most trivial detail was painful. Another Primary class reacted in a similar way to the story, "The Prince and His Palace."[1] This love of certain stories makes it possible to connect many of the stories of the life of Jesus with different types of Christian activity, a most important use of the recall of stories. It also places an added responsibility upon the teacher in that she should tell every story as perfectly and with as gripping an effect as possible.

Reports of Primary Story Interests

Recent reports on the story interests of Primary children are available and may be secured by Primary teachers. One of these reports indicates that the major story interests of Primary children are in

[1] Course 2, Part 3, Primary Courses—Graded Press.

animal tales, fairy tales, folklore, poetry, miscellaneous stories, children's experiences.[2]

Vocabulary Study for Primary Teachers

The vocabulary of Primary children furnishes another fruitful study for Primary teachers. Entire blocks can drop out of a story or a conversation so far as meaning is concerned if the teacher is not careful in her choice of words. Naturally, the children's understanding will be as complete as their ability to understand what is said. Gates, *A Reading Vocabulary for the Primary Grades,* Bureau of Teachers College Publications, Columbia University (price, 20 cents), is an excellent word-list for this study. It has selected words with the child's ability to grasp meanings rather than his ability to read words in mind. Perhaps the Primary teacher will find it profitable to study all parts of her class session with this list before her. By checking her words she can learn whether she is using words which the children can understand.

Length of a Primary Story

The teacher should avoid the long story. Many Primary workers think that five minutes is quite a long period for the telling of a story. From six hundred to eight hundred and fifty words is a good standard length, varying slightly in a few cases.

The Parts of a Story

A story has four parts: a beginning, which arouses and centers interest on certain important characters, on the setting of the story, and on its problem; a suc-

[2] Grant and White, *Reading Interest Compared With the Content of School Readers.*

cession of events which follow each other as logically as the steps in a stairway and are as necessary to each other; a climax which is well defined, solving the problem of the story; an ending which is satisfying because it leaves the mind at rest.

Beginnings

Brevity. Beginnings arouse and center interest through the use of certain methods. One of these is dignified restraint in the number of words used. Teachers sometimes make the mistake, especially in telling Bible stories and stories with a foreign background, of using a good deal of preliminary explanation. Most of this background material can be woven into the body of the story itself and will lend color to the action. For example, a teacher may best begin the story of "The Four Fishermen" by plunging into a vivid description of Peter wearily casting his net into the early morning sea and bending to draw it in—empty—not by a detailed statement regarding fishing in Galilee.

General beginnings are to be avoided because they violate this necessity for brevity and directness. Once the writer heard a teacher say to a group, "I am going to tell you a Bible story about a man in a boat," and she waited to discover whether she would adventure with Paul on his way to Rome, with Jonah fleeing from the voice of God, or should cross Galilee with the Master. Such a beginning was just so much waste of words. Another sin against the rule of brevity is the riddle or guessing beginning, "What do you think I saw?"

Sense Appeal. A second method to use to arouse, center, and hold interest is the use of sense appeal. There are no more powerful avenues to the human brain than the senses. Bible stories have been told colorlessly by

persons who did not see the incidents and characters in the stories vividly themselves and the children's interest in them has lagged.

Often the helpfulness of Jesus becomes more apparent to children if the need which he met is made vivid through the use of sense appeal. In telling the story of the healing of the deaf man the teacher can begin by telling how the man never heard the voices of children, or the song of the birds in the springtime, or of the water lapping on the shore, or even his mother's voice calling to him when he was a little lad. Thus the man's need becomes a pressing one. It is considered wise to use an appeal to one sense at a time in order to avoid confusion.

Suggestiveness. A good beginning has also an element of mystery, of suggestiveness, of good times coming. It does not tell all that will follow, but it indicates enough of the problem to make the hearers keen to have the story go on.

Succession of Events

The events in a story should follow each other logically. Not one should be included which does not make a necessary contribution to the rising action. The events of a story do not follow each other like beads on a chain, but are arranged with cumulative effect like the steps in a stairway. Each rests upon the preceding events, each leads to the next in order, and the person is farther along to the summit as each step is taken. One step omitted would be a stumbling-block and a danger. One step too many would so shorten the tread that the ascent would be wearisome. A child's interest in a story may easily be lost in the long detour through unnecessary details.

Climaxes

The climax is the summit of the rising action. The sense of strain has become great. The problem has become more and more evident. Then comes the solution and the children lean back with relief. It is well to determine the climax in advance and choose the sequence that a perfectly proportioned story is the result.

Satisfying Conclusions

The conclusion should follow immediately after the climax. It should be satisfying, leaving the mind at rest. It should be brief, for what reason is there for continuing a story after its problem has reached its crisis and solution?

No Moralizing. The conclusion should not moralize. The truth of the story should have been woven into the very warp and woof of it. If this truth is at all in keeping with a child's interests and understanding, he knows already what this truth is without being told.

No Summary. A conclusion should not summarize the action of the story, holding a drill on its facts. This too is unnecessary and tends to minimize the emotional power of the story, for worship, conduct control, or social activity.

Happy Ending. Usually, the endings of stories for children should emphasize happiness, and show how satisfying right conduct is. The old fairy tales were wise at this point with their "and they lived happily ever after." There is no need to be anxious about those who have entered into bliss!

Indirect Methods of Developing the Story's Theme

Since a story is an account of some bit of life and

has dramatic value, it has a problem to solve. While this problem should be suggested in the beginning, a too direct statement in the sequence and references to it in the conclusion will probably make the story inartistic, since these practices interfere with the charm and indirect appeal of the story. How, then, may the truth of the story be made vivid?

Contrast. Story-tellers use contrast as one method of developing the action of a story. They contrast ways of behaving, either the conduct of several persons (as in "The Good Samaritan") or the changing behavior of the same person who is growing in ability to control conduct according to Christian standards, as in "What Bradley Owed."[3] Emotional responses are contrasted, good and evil are balanced against each other by contrasting kindliness and cruelty.

Jesus' stories show a masterful use of contrast. The teacher will understand this characteristic of his parables if she will contrast the attitude of the younger son to his father before and after his sojourn in a far country ("The Prodigal Son"), or the actions of the three servants who were given the talents and the same command with reference to their stewardship ("The Talents"). Then contrast is used in the conduct of the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan on the Jericho road, and also in the outcomes from sowing on barren, rocky, and good ground ("The Sower").

Repetition. Repetition is another method of developing the story. Repetition forms a link of familiarity between the incidents of the story. The younger the child, the more valuable is the repetition. Often the repetition of the story's keynote in the form of a rhyme sings itself into the child's mind. Repetition

[3] Hugh T. Kerr, *Children's Story Sermons.*

gives the story-teller a chance to say again and again the important thing. Through contrast and repetition the story's message receives nice balance and due emphasis.

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Questions

1. Choose one Bible story and prepare to tell it. Keep a record of the steps in your procedure. Note over a period of time and see what preparation is most helpful to you in telling stories.

2. Take the story of the healing of Bartimæus and show how through sense appeal you can make the need of the blind man very graphic.

3. Adapt the story "Why the Chimes Rang" for Primary children. Make a record of how you proceeded and of the truth on which you focused.

4. Find six Bible stories suitable for Primary children and note how contrast and repetition are used in the development of each story.

CHAPTER IX

THE USE OF POEMS, SONGS, AND MUSIC DURING THE CLASS SESSION

Introductory Study

1. What poems have you ever used with your Primary class?

2. For what purposes did you use them?

3. Quote some appropriate seasonal poem to a child while on a walk, or while sitting quietly at home. Note whether the child shows any appreciation of the poem. How did you judge whether he did or not?

4. Ask a Primary child to read you a favorite poem from one of his school readers. Note his choice.

5. How can the Primary teacher use songs with her class group even when there is no separate classroom?

The Use of Poems

Poems may be introduced into the class session in many situations similar to those in which the story has value. They may be used as prayer poems, to arouse a worshipful attitude and lend devotional meaning to some event or class plan. They may introduce problems to the class and also suggest ways of solving these same problems. They may help to broaden a child's ideas of what a certain experience means. Poems may be used also to help a child to express in a beautiful way how he feels about an unusual event. Poems may lend beauty to commonplace affairs. They may add interest and variety to class work. They may be used

for fun and frolic. They are never to be used unless they make a genuine contribution to the class period and add value to class purposes. Let us examine some teaching situations to discover how these methods of using poetry have worked out in actual practice.

A Climax to Experience. One Christmas interest in the activities which the children had planned ran so high that there was danger of fatigue and overstimulation to nerves already tense with the holiday spirit. The teacher suggested a walk. "You may come back and tell me what you see," she said; so the children went with an assistant, a young girl doing "practice teaching." When they returned, the children found the teacher playing softly "Silent Night." Quietly they placed their chairs very close to her. The group drifted normally into singing the hymn several times and from that to talking about Jesus. They spoke of how they were like the Wise Men in delighting to give to Jesus the very best that they had, their Christmas giving having been connected with this motive. "That reminds me of a poem," said the leader:

> **"What can I give Him,**
> **Poor as I am?**
> **If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;**
> **If I were a wise man, I would do my part;**
> **Yet what can I give Him? Give my heart."[1]**

"Good," said Jack. "Now, doesn't that just about say it?"

A poem had helped a church-school group perfectly to express their finest response to Christmas. This class had a separate classroom. The same plan might have been used by any Primary teacher, however. She would

[1] Christina Rossetti.

have gone for the walk with the children herself. Perhaps, they might have rested a moment outside the door or even on the church steps to sing softly "Silent Night." The poem could have been used at the class table or in the class circle.

To Start Class Plans. A Primary class invariably chuckles in appreciation and responds with hearty planning when "A Good Thanksgiving," by Marion Douglas, is used to start the Thanksgiving plans. "Which Loved Best?" by Joy Allison, is as good as any story for introducing the problem of helpfulness at home. It has been used for this purpose by many Primary teachers.

To Deepen the Meaning of an Experience. A second grade had been helping at church. One Sunday the teacher took the children into the sanctuary. They stood very still before the stained-glass windows and talked about them. Their minister joined the group and called attention to the beautiful flowers which a friend had sent for the morning service. After he left the group the teacher and the children went back to the Primary room. The children were quiet, evidently moved by the experience, so the teacher quoted softly,

> **"The church, it always seems to me,**
> **Is lovely as a place can be."**

There was a little sigh which told her as no words could that the class session had reached a high point.

Teaching Value of Rhymes. Rhymes or jingles in stories are not really poetry, but they carry the message. They are enjoyed by children and the repeated rhyme helps to make the message clear. If the teacher will recall how the rhymes of some of the classic fairy tales have clung in her memory, she will understand this use

of the rhyme. Bible scholars say that Jesus used rhythm in the parables. Hebrew poetry differs so greatly from English, however, that the rhythm is lost in the translation.

To Lead to Worship. In a worship program on appreciation of summer the group talked of the music of summer, the day music, the night music, and the leader found that the second stanza of Josephine Daskam Bacon's "Night Music" perfectly expressed the reaction of the group.

A class was talking about the beauty of summer. There had been many storms and the children were stirred by the beauty of the rainbows. By inspiration there leaped into the teacher's mind Wordsworth's lines,

> **"My heart leaps up when I behold**
> **A rainbow in the sky."**

The moment of worship following was joyful and reverent.

Sometimes one stanza of a hymn may be used as a poem. The children sang "All Things Bright and Beautiful" during the worship service. In the class session that followed, one grade was telling about vacation experiences. There was a discussion of the beauties of the mountains which quite a number of the children had seen. The teacher referred to the hymn, "All Things Bright and Beautiful," and then quoted:

> **"The purple-headed mountain,**
> **The river running by,**
> **The sunset and the morning red**
> **That brighten up the sky."**
>
> —*Alexander.*

The blending of the familiar stanza with the unfamiliar one had both the charm of repetition and of novelty.

The Prayer Poem. A third grade in the midst of a missionary enterprise was planning to choose a prayer. One Sunday the teacher submitted to them,

> "Our Father, you have given me
> So much of love and joy to-day,
> That I am thinking joy and love
> To other children far away.
>
> Wherever they lie down to sleep
> Happy and tired from work and play,
> Yellow and brown and black and white,
> Our Father, bless us all to-night!"[3]

"I would like that if it didn't leave the Indians out," one child said. So the seventh line of the poem was revised to read "Yellow, red, brown, black, and white," and the children used the prayer with satisfaction.

There has been such a thoughtless mechanical use of rhyming prayers that it seems well to say that a rhyming prayer should be taught thoughtfully. It should not be the exclusive form of prayer used. Indeed, rhyming prayers should be used but seldom. As the incident of the third grade shows, a rhyming prayer should be subjected to thoughtful scrutiny by the group before it becomes a class or departmental prayer. It should be subject to revision if it does not perfectly express the feeling and purpose of the class.

To Stimulate Class Thinking. A teacher of a third grade began one Sunday by asking her children to read a poem which expressed trust in God as a way of overcoming fear. She had been asked a number of questions by her group that made her think a discussion of this problem would be profitable. She asked the children to read the poem through silently. Then she

[3] By Amelia J. Barr. Used by permission of the National Child Welfare Association, Inc., New York City.

began by asking what putting trust in God meant—a reference to a line in the poem. Immediately religious problems were raised by the children which showed that the poem had stimulated them to think.

To Secure Variety. Third-grade children like a varied appeal. They are often tired of the type of class session which has been used during the other two years in the Primary. One teacher of a third grade met this need by reading bits from John Oxenham's "Gentlemen —The King" instead of telling the familiar stories of Jesus.

The Teacher Who Uses Poetry

If poetry is used effectively with Primary children, it will be by teachers who find in it food for a hunger within themselves. The teacher who uses poetry naturally, as an expression of her own best self, will arouse keen appreciation for this form of human expression. It is a mistake to think that children cannot appreciate or enjoy poetry. Of course the selection must be short unless it is a story poem and simple in form. The teacher who shares with her children her own joy in poetry will be bringing into the life of her group a fair treasure.

In *The Winged Horse* there is a passage which tells beautifully how poetry feeds the soul of man:

"And if poetry has lost many of its old functions, it has kept and strengthened certain very important ones. It began by assisting men in their need and fear and perplexity, and in the world of cities and books and it still does this. Its work is more subtle than it once was, but it is still far-reaching. Men and women who work in offices and factories lead a life that is limited. They find little opportunity to express positive emotions,

and less opportunity to act them. They turn to poetry and discover emotion that fulfills their own impulses. In the beauty of verse their own hunger for beauty is satisfied. The bravery and confidence of poetry feeds their craving for personal recognition. Poetry keeps alive in them the desire to go on, preserves the sense of brightness, through days too seldom bright. And, less directly, the noble tone of all great verse sets for millions a kind of ideal of behavior. Boys and girls chant to themselves lines that mold a purpose or make a way of thinking or feeling. Men and women come back from difficult days of work to remind themselves through poetry that there is something nobler in life than they tasted at the stint in the workshop or behind the counter. In a similar fashion, most genuinely great men and women turn to poetry for a spiritual force nothing else seems to give them."[3]

Children's Poetry Interests

Perhaps teachers will be interested in an experiment through which the poetry interests of children were tested. This experiment was directed by Miriam Blanton Huber. It was tried with fifty thousand children living in all parts of the country. In most cases the situation was so controlled that the choices indicated were the children's own and were influenced as little as possible by the teacher. The sixty poems ranking highest in the first three grades were selected from one hundred poems chosen for each grade and twelve reactions from each child were secured. The ten highest in rank are as follows (of course, some poems occurred in the lists for several grades):

[3] "Pegasus in To-morrow," from *The Winged Horse*, Joseph Auslander and Frank Ernest Hill. Used by permission of Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., publishers.

Grade I[4]

1. "The Woodpecker"—Elizabeth M. Roberts.
2. "Only One Mother"—George Cooper.
3. "A Visit from Saint Nicholas"—Clement C. Moore.
4. "I Like Little Pussy"—Jane Taylor.
5. "Frogs at School"—George Cooper.
6. "Jack in the Pulpit"—Rupert S. Holland.
7. "The Rabbit"—Edith King.
8. "A Farmer Went Riding"—Unknown.
9. "The Child and the Fairies"—Unknown.
10. "Three Jovial Huntsmen"—Unknown.

Grade II

1. "The Raggedy Man"—James Whitcomb Riley.
2. "Kentucky Babe"—Richard Henry Buck.
3. "Our Flag"—Lydia A. C. Ward.
4. "Hiawatha's Childhood"—Henry W. Longfellow.
5. "Lullaby"—Paul Laurence Dunbar.
6. "Cradle Hymn"—Martin Luther.
7. "The Sugar Plum Tree"—Eugene Field.
8. "The Star Spangled Banner"—Francis Scott Key.
9. "The Owl and the Pussy Cat"—Edward Lear.
10. "When the Sleepy Man Comes"—Charles G. D. Roberts.

Grade III

1. "Change About"—Unknown.
2. "A Long Time Ago"—Elizabeth Prentiss.
3. "A Boy's Mother"—James Whitcomb Riley.
4. "America"—Samuel Francis Smith.
5. "Raggle Taggle Gypsies"—Unknown.
6. "Robin Hood and the Ranger"—Unknown.
7. "King Bruce and the Spider"—Eliza Cook.

[4] From *Children's Interests in Poetry*, by M. B. Huber. Teacher's College Record, October, 1926. Used by permission.

8. "Which Loved Best?"—Joy Allison.
9. "The Flag Goes By"—Henry H. Bennett.
10. "The Cow"—Robert Louis Stevenson.

There seems to be a definite variety of interests in each grade. These poems are also the first ten choices out of a list of sixty for each of the three grades. However, there are trends in interest in each grade. These should not be regarded as fixed, nor should the fact be ignored by the teacher that individual children will differ widely in their poetry interests. The interest in animals and play in Grade I, in lullabies in Grade II, and in fairy poems in Grade III is to be noted. A study of the poems listed should be of value to teachers in helping them to select poems and songs of sufficient simplicity to interest their children.

Poems Children Make

A Natural Expression. Children are always making poetry and often setting it to music. Mary rode into the sunset and chanted from the back seat of the car:

> **"The red sunset! The pretty sunset!**
> **It is like my mother's scarf,**
> **It is like my mother's scarf."**

There have been Primary classes which were not interested in learning a poem or a poetic passage from the Bible, but who lost themselves in the composition of a poem expressing what they felt as a result of some rich experience. Usually, there will be at least one Primary class that will want to respond in this way.

Making Opportunities for Creating Poems. Teachers should make opportunities for children to create poems. Such poems may become a genuine contribution to the

worship life of the class. The following report of a spontaneous dramatization which led to the writing of a spring poem is a very lovely one:

"As Ruth was puzzling over the idea, the teacher asked her if she couldn't begin the play. She was ready. Several girls were chosen to be flowers. Her spirit was catching, and the flowers knelt down asleep. We watched breathlessly. The flowers pantomimed her story very naturally. She paused as the ideas developed. But no one noticed that in the real interest in the development. Finally she realized she wanted children to represent the sun and rain fairies. Eager participants volunteered from her informal audience.

"Time was allowed between the lines for the action of the flowers in slowly waking and growing tall. The sun needed time to take effect, as did the raindrops in their little running steps here and there among the flowers with a pitter-patter suggestion.

"After the play was worked out, every child was enthusiastic and eager to go ahead. Booklets with the worship service written inside were made for the audience. Here was an opportunity for creative work from every child, because each decorated the covers just as he wished. Some cut out flowers from decorative paper napkins or crepe paper and pasted them on, but the more original children bordered the booklets with crayon drawings of leaves or flowers representative of spring.

"Finally, however, Tilda, who formerly had lived in the country, gave, in a quiet manner, her original verses. Of course she hesitated as she gave the simple expressions. How else can we encourage this type of creative work except by being sympathetic with the first stammerings? Each line was written down as she

gave it except the last. Hours later the teacher's doorbell rang. There stood Tilda.

"'I know something else for my poem.'

"'What is it?' asked the teacher.

"'I love God because he made the flowers.'

"And although the length of line did not harmonize with the other lines, it was added without comment. Tilda had never before seemed capable of pausing long enough in her giggles and wiggles to think seriously."

"Poem by Tilda Bush:

"Winter is past.
Flowers are sleeping,
Spring is here!
Flowers are waking,
Birds are singing,
Sun is laughing,
Pussy willows are here.
God made the flowers,
And everyone is happy.
I love God because he made the flowers."[5]

Children's Love of Jingles. Children also love to compose rhymes and jingles. The writer treasures a wonderful valentine autographed by many children, a valentine surprise. It is brave with paper lace and bears the following rhyme. Several children tried to write rhymes for this valentine, and this one the second grade, who had started the plan, considered best:

"The children in the summer
Are singing, bright and gay,
But they are most the happiest
On Saint Valentine's Day."

Helping Children to Create Poems

The teacher should free herself from the idea that

[5] Reported by Mabel G. Wagner. Used by permission.

poems must rhyme. Then she should release her children from always finding a rhyme.

Through Joyful Experiences. One March, spring came overnight and the garden which the windows of the department overlooked was a bower of purple and white lilacs. The second-grade children stood quietly at the window inhaling deep breaths of the perfume. No other class in the department was disturbed by their movements. Just then a robin lit on the topmost branch of a tree just beginning to turn green.

"See," said George, "the robin in the tiptop of the tree says that spring is here."

"And the lilacs smell so sweet. They say that spring is here," added Dorothy.

"That is as lovely as a poem," the teacher said. So the children wrote it in their class book and with sincerity told the heavenly Father of their joy in the springtime.

Creative expression through the story or the poem is hardly to be expected from children in a church school where there is little to see, little to do except sit in straight rows or about crowded tables and listen to a leader or a teacher tell about life and general principles of right or wrong. One reason our children have been so passive in the past has been that Primary teachers have taught under conditions where keeping quiet while a teacher talked was considered good behavior. What the children felt, thought, or did, was of little concern. First, there must be the experience rich enough to stir the child and make him feel the need of becoming articulate. This means that at times we must teach on trips out of doors and not be bound to one room. It means that when we do teach in our Primary room, it must not be a barren place.

The Teacher's Skill and Sympathy. Then there must be a skillful and sympathetic teacher ready to help the class to expression on the most spiritual plane possible for a Primary child. The leader will know just when to give help. Sometimes a few questions will help the children to express their ideas. Sometimes the teacher may help develop an idea. Often one child will surprise the teacher and spur the other children by his ability. If fellowship with God comes naturally as a climax to the entire teaching experience, then the most skillful type of religious teaching has been accomplished.

First, the experience, then the child's response on a high spiritual plane, then the dawning consciousness that God is near.

Collections of Poetry

There are some charming collections of poetry for children. *Silver Pennies,* compiled by Blanche Thompson, is a treasure-trove for any Primary teacher. *The Graded Poetry Books,* the Rand McNally Company, have been carefully compiled after experimentation in the poetry interests of children. *A Child's Garden of Verse,* by Robert Louis Stevenson, and *John Martin's Book* would be valuable for every teacher. Power, *Poems for Memorizing,* The Haw Wagner Publishing Company, San Francisco, California, has a good graded list. It costs only seventy-five cents. The Primary story paper published by the denominational house will furnish from time to time charming children's poems which teachers may refer to or file for future use.

Use of Songs by the Class

Increased Teaching of Songs in the Primary Class. While the unit on worship and the one on administra-

tion will deal fully with the use of song and music with Primaries, their use by the Primary class or grade cannot be ignored in a book dealing with materials and methods. There is a growing tendency, as evidenced in the Teacher's Manuals now published by the various denominational houses, to suggest an increased study of songs by separate classes. Sometimes the procedure plans that one grade learn a song in order that it may make a contribution to the departmental worship service or that the class learn a song as its part in a special program which the department is developing.

Finding Ways of Using Songs. Many of these suggestions seem impossible to Primary teachers because of the handicaps of their present equipment. However, resourceful teachers who are finding ways of carrying out these suggestions are discovering that the necessary extra effort is worth while. Some of them use the department piano at times when the department is not in session. Some use the period before the opening of the school, and still others find a vacant assembly room of an advanced department during the class period. Sometimes teachers will find it impossible to sing during the class period. Then it will be advisable to use the songs as poems.

The Trend to Large Classes. There is also a development in the administration of a Primary Department which must not be ignored because it has bearing upon the use of songs by the class. This is the plan by which the Primary Department is separated into one large class for each grade. These grades have their separate sessions. Under this system the teacher can have worship periods of a very spontaneous and informal type. She can use songs just as the departmental superintendent uses them in those departments where the three

grades are together for a period of time each Sunday morning.

The Use of a Chapel. Along with this separation of the children into large classes goes the use of chapels by various departments. For example, the Junior Department may use the chapel during the early part of the church-school session or one Sunday. The Primary grades may meet together there at some later hour on another Sunday. In these combined worship services of the Primary grades, it is essential that all three grades participate whole-heartedly. The learning of songs is cared for in the grades rather than in the service held in the chapel. This plan is in experimental use in only a very few schools at present. There is a definite trend in this direction, however. So definite is it that it is influencing church-school building plans and must not be ignored by forward-looking teachers.

Teaching of Songs to Primary Children

Since there is this increase in the emphasis upon the use of songs by the grade, the teacher as well as the departmental superintendent should become skillful in teaching Primary songs. She will try to arouse a purpose or motive for learning the song. She will seek to have the children learn the songs in a worshipful manner. In teaching a song the teacher will try to connect past experiences vividly with the song or set up new experiences which will give it meaning.

Using Conversation and Pictures. Suppose, for example, that the teacher, on a January Sunday, chooses to teach the song, "Winter Day, Frosty Day," in connection with her class plans. She will probably introduce the song through the use of conversation, giving the children an opportunity to talk about all the

pleasant winter experiences that they have had during the past week. If there is snow on the ground, perhaps the group will go to the window or out on the church lawn, look at the snow, play in it and talk about it. If neither activity is possible, perhaps the teacher will show pictures of children playing in the snow. This will encourage the group to tell about their own experiences. It will create a sense of joy and wellbeing. She will tell them how the snow forms a cloak over the green of the winter wheat and over the seed fast asleep in the brown earth, to keep them from freezing.

She will say softly the first two lines of this hymn:

> **"Winter day, frosty day,**
> **God a cloak on all doth lay."**

She will then begin to talk about some of the creatures for whom God provides a special cloak during the bitter cold. She will tell about the lamb whose fleece keeps him warm all during the winter; so warm, in fact, that when springtime comes it has to be sheared to keep him from getting too hot. She will speak about the little downy winter feathers which form a winter undercoat for the birds. If birds are seen at the window, the group will stop and look at them, or they will recall experiences of how they have fed the winter birds and listened to them chirp gayly. They will look at pictures of winter birds. A trip out doors to feed birds would add to the vividness of the experience.

The children will be led to talk about their own homes and food; how they are kept warm all through the winter; what their homes mean to them; how pleasant it is to run in and have a cup of hot chocolate after playing in the snow. Once a teacher was developing this song by this method and before the last line of

the song could be discussed, a child said, "I think God is good; let us thank him." And the group did.

Using a Story. Sometimes a good story introduces a song. In teaching "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus," the teacher leads the group to recall certain stories about Jesus, stories which tell about "deeds by the wayside and tales of the sea." Long stories are tedious and waste time, however. Nor must the teacher overdo the use of conversation and the use of pictures in teaching songs. Some songs, especially those which are conversational in character, need only to be read to be appreciated. When such a song is being taught, this method would not only be a waste of time but a confusion of the mental pictures which the children should form. Imagine trying to introduce through pictures or story the charmingly simple favorite of all children, "Friends," by Elizabeth Shields.[6]

Abuse of Story, Picture, and Conversation. Some teachers have abused the use of conversation, story, and picture in teaching songs. A Primary worker once said, "Any song is good for Primary children, if you can illustrate it." To prove her point, she showed a series of charts illustrating, "Take My Life and Let It Be." A red heart was used to illustrate the first line. The attempt to make symbols clear to children through the use of pictures is, of course, a useless effort, since the child does not see beyond the illustration. The spiritual meaning of the illustration he is not yet mature enough to understand. For example, a child was once singing "Brighten the Corner Where You Are." When he was asked what the song meant, he answered after hesitation, "I am not quite sure, but I think you're talking to the sun."

[6] In *Worship and Conduct Songs for Beginners and Primaries.*

Singing the Song. The teacher should know the song herself before she attempts to teach it. After the song has been associated with the child's daily life, the next step is to sing the song distinctly and naturally or to have the music played while the children listen carefully to see if the piano says the same words as the ones which they have been learning.

As a next step the teacher sings the song and then asks the children to tell her what phrases of it they can repeat. If in teaching "The Church" one child remembered the sentence beginning "The quiet Sabbath morn," another "The chimes of church bells," and so on, each of these parts is sung. The children take delight in recalling the phrases or sentences and are stimulated by this method to give real thought and effort to the mastery of the song. It arouses a play spirit. If the teacher cannot possibly sing the song in an acceptable voice, perhaps she can arrange with some older pupil in the school or with the organist or some other person with musical ability to teach the song correctly. The song should be sung in this manner several times. Usually by this time quite a number of the children will be able to sing the first stanza without great difficulty.

Repeating the Song. If later on in the morning the song can be used in connection with some activity or in the worship period of the department, its repetition after such a short lapse of time will greatly aid in memorizing it. There should be frequent repetitions until the song is learned. Difficult verses should be sung separately until the class can sing each stanza correctly.

Correcting Faulty Learnings. The teacher should listen carefully in order to discover mistakes, such as

wrong rhythm or enunciation, or wrong pronunciation. There is nothing more surprising than the number of combinations which are meaningless and yet sound very much like the words of a song. When a word is unfamiliar, it should be explained. Teachers should set as their goal the thorough learning of a few excellent songs. These should key in with and give worshipful meaning to the activities and interests of the class and not be taught apart from them. Many of the present Primary courses suggest songs which do connect with the class plans.

Standards for Words of Songs for Children

The religious songs of children should be judged by certain standards if the songs are to be of social or worshipful value.

Within the Child's Experience. First, the words should be within both the feeling and social experience of the child. Even though there may be difficult word pictures which the children must study to appreciate and which may be a little beyond them, the song should have genuine meaning. For this reason symbolic songs, mystical songs, and songs describing mature religious experience do not help Primary children.

Good Poetry. The song should be a good poem. There is no excuse for cheap or tawdry verse in Primary songs, since there are many exquisite religious songs for children. We do the indirect learnings of a child concerning the value of the church a real violence if we let him sing silly songs like "G-o-o-d, Good," or "Jesus Wants Me for a Sunbeam," or "Once There Was a Naughty Boy," when the same child is singing in public school a great classic like Shakespeare's "Hark, Hark! the Lark," or a charming thing like Stevenson's

"How Do You Like to Go Up in a Swing?" Religion and the church will be cheapened in his opinion.

Ideas of God and of Jesus. Other tests concern themselves with the ideas of God which the words set forth. We must be as careful of the ideas of God given in our songs as we are of those developed in any other part of our teaching. The same is true of the ideas of Jesus portrayed in songs. We need to be careful also of the missionary teachings of songs. The reader is referred to Chapters I and II for a discussion of the points to be safeguarded in each case. Every teacher should subject songs to a rigid testing before deciding to use them with her class.

The Standards of Good Singing for Children

The "Head Voice." Children from six to eight sing with a very light voice. This thin voice is the one true musical voice for children according to all the great authorities on the child voice. The tone is sweet and there is no strain in singing. The range of the voice of a Primary child is from "e" above middle "c" to the "e" above "c" in the next octave. Music for Primary children should accent the rhythm decidedly and have a strong melody. Folk songs are considered the perfect type of music for Primary children and may be used as a guide by the teacher who has limited musical training.

Arrangements from the Masters. Many of the loveliest songs for children are arrangements, especially adapted for children, from the works of the masters. Examples of such songs are "'Tis God Who Sends the Spring."[7] This music is arranged from Mendelssohn, The El. Heerwart's collection. The music of the song "Summer" is an excerpt from Haydn. Still another

[7] From *Melodies*, Leyda Publishing Company.

example is "God's Love,"[8] which is an arrangement from Mozart.

Listening to Music

The child needs not only to learn the joy of expressing himself worshipfully through song, but needs also to be taught how to listen to worshipful music. Sometimes a few sentences explaining the music before it is played, or a short story, will increase the child's appreciation of it. Sometimes it is well to say nothing and let the music have its own way.

Children should hear from time to time great music which is perhaps beyond their comprehension. There is an upward urge about such an experience. "Children should have every possible opportunity to become familiar through pleasing experiences with the masterpieces in music. They can appreciate something of the fine qualities of these long before they know much of the technique of music and before they have had much experience with simpler music. I do not have to know geology to appreciate some of the sublime grandeur and beauty of Pike's Peak or Mount Hood. Neither do I have to spend years in looking at mole hills and hummocks before I can respond with thrills of appreciation to these snow-capped peaks. No child of to-day needs to be deprived of the symphonies and cantatas and oratorios and operas until he is grown to maturity. The experiences in music possible to-day are so rich, so worth while, so prolific in enkindling noble aspirations, that no child should be denied a share in them."[9]

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[8] *Worship Songs for the Sunday School and Home,* Volume I. Mrs. Crosby Adams.

[9] From The Teacher's College Record, March, 1927: Chapter II, "Meanings and Moods in Music," by Frederick G. Bonser. Used by permission of Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Helping Children to Use Music Creatively

The Child's Own Music. It is perfectly natural that the child should create melody to accompany the poems that he makes. Children are always singing their own rhymes. Then from time to time the teacher with the help of the pianist may be able to record this music for the future pleasure and use of the class or of the department.

Other Creative Uses of Music. However, the child does not have to make up original music in order to use music creatively. In fact, this method can be wasteful of time in the church school because of the large amount of time required to do it well. Again a child has very little storehouse of experience from which to draw for this work. In speaking of creative expression through music, Doctor Surette says wisely:

"Schools sometimes seem to consider the term as signifying only original work, so called, either in the form of melodies invented by the children or of instruments made by them to play upon. Now while both these are, in a sense, creative, it is, I think, a grave error to stress them as they are being stressed in some schools. It is an error because neither one of these projects is important in the training of children in music, and because each takes too much time."[10]

The Church and the Child's Musical Education

The church school should endeavor not to handicap the very splendid musical education which the public school is providing for children. It would seem a great pity for the church, whose handmaid music has always been, to offer any hindrance to the child's musical edu-

[10] *Progressive Education*, first quarter, 1927. Used by permission.

cation. Yet a music supervisor in one of our city school systems remarked recently: "I always dread for Monday to come. The children have been to church school and their singing voices have been coarsened in consequence." Whether we sing songs in the department or the class, we should use those that are suitable to children, of high grade, of religious value. We should be careful also that our method of teaching contributes to rather than hinders the musical education of the child.

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Suggestions for Study

1. Select a seasonal poem appropriate for the time of the year and plan to use it in conversation with the children. Note the results.

2. Take your teaching material for the year (teacher's and pupil's) and list the songs which are suggested for

memorization. Make a plan for the teaching of at least one of these songs.

Select a story or find pictures which illustrate the word pictures in the song. First of all, determine whether these additional materials are necessary for the teaching of this song.

3. Recall any songs or poems which you may have written when a child. What led you to this creative expression?

What Would You Do?

1. Suppose your department superintendent asked your class to contribute to the Christmas worship. You had suggested that the children learn Luke 2. 8-14 to recite, but they showed no interest. Suppose one child, due to public-school teaching, suggested that the class write a Christmas poem. What would you do?

2. Suppose your class were asked to sing a summer hymn for the department. How, under your present conditions, could you arrange for the children to learn it?

CHAPTER X

DEVELOPING GROUP PURPOSES THROUGH CONVERSATION

Introductory Study

1. Read the suggestions for conversation for at least three class sessions in the teacher's book which you use from Sunday to Sunday. List the purposes of the conversation in the plans for each of the sessions.

2. Before reading this chapter, write as complete a record as possible of your last class period with your children. Record what you said and what the class said either spontaneously or as a response. What are your greatest difficulties in using conversation naturally and skillfully?

Conversation in the Class Session

Conversation is a necessary and inevitable accompaniment of teaching which guides the purposes and plans of children while they grow in the Christian experience. A class which is thinking through problems together, working out plans, learning to appreciate beauty, or to worship through beauty whether in nature, in art, in music or in human effort will have many topics to discuss. Boys and girls who are forming judgments and are learning better ways of living and higher Christian values will necessarily have to talk with each other and the teacher.

To think of a class busily engaged in plans which have value in their eyes and to imagine a silent group

would be possible only to one ignorant of the normal life of children. "A school that is at all alive calls for much discussion of worth-while things. The activities may of necessity be more meager, less suggestive than could be desired while we await more generous provision for the lower grades, but purposeful, varied, and eager expression through language can nevertheless be abundantly called forth unless the teacher is bound to a different course by oppressive authority."[1] We might well add for the church school, and unless she is teaching by the telling method and is not introducing the children to opportunities of learning the worthy Christian life by living it.

Conversation must be regarded as a method to be used whenever it is needed by the class to plan, carry out, or judge some purpose or to think through some problem. No fixed time for its use in a class session can be set any more than for the use of the story or poem. It is a natural part of every class session, to be used whenever the children need to talk about their plans or problems.

Setting the Stage for Conversation

Friendly Atmosphere. Children, like adults, have something of value to say under certain conditions only and very wisely remain silent under others. First of all, the teacher must make the environment so friendly that children will think of the class as a natural place in which to carry on conversation. Formal arrangements of chairs have dampened many a conversation. It is hard for children freely to converse among themselves and with a teacher when seated in stiff rows and

[1] Annie E. Moore, *The Primary School.* Used by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.

unable to see each other, sometimes catching only a glimpse of the teacher. A teacher who stands stiffly before the group is not as able to stimulate informal conversation as a friendly teacher seated in the midst of the group, a real member of it.

Sometimes the teacher stimulates fellowship by permitting the children to sit close to her. When stories are read to the children in one class, such a closely knit group is permitted. At Christmas storybooks were bought for some friends with whom this class was sharing. In order to help the children to understand better how worth while the gifts were, familiar stories were read from these books and enjoyed. The children were seated in a very intimate group during the reading.

Personal Interest of the Teacher in Each Child. The teacher should let the children know that she is interested in them and should share some of her own experiences with them. Then the children look forward to Sunday as a happy time to report on heart-moving happenings, on trips, on delights, sorrows, and difficulties.

"Why did you stay away so long?" asked Jean of the teacher, who was really a half hour early. "I've been here a long time just waiting to tell you I've got a new brother," the confidence rising to a perfect crescendo of joy.

Individual Differences. The teacher remembers that individual differences determine the conversational interests of children. Here is a boy whose conversation is largely a report on what "the fellows and I are doing" or a request for advice regarding ways of making some article needed in the plans under way. Here is a child who has cherished an experience for days, something seen on a trip perhaps, and wants to tell

about it. Here is another child who wants to generalize and express opinions and who is rather indolent when called upon to give service. Still another child wants a chance to confide privately some difficulty in conduct, which is proving almost too much for him. There is the child who wants to learn the way of things, causes, laws. Sometimes more than one of these interests will stimulate the same child to converse. The teacher will keep in mind individual differences and will help each child also to think along channels other than his already habitual ones.

Stimulating Surroundings. The teacher can set the stage for further discussion of present class plans or of new plans by adding suggestive and interesting elements to the classroom or the class's corner of the Primary room. Certain well-selected books which suggest activities may be placed on the tables. Objects may be added. Unfinished work on an activity may be placed on the table where the children can continue work upon it on arriving. Pictures which give information or arouse thought may be at hand. Nothing should be used which will not give help to the present class work or to that to be projected.

Nature objects, such as cocoons, for example, bring forth bursts of conversation which often lead to worship. These may be used when the class has plans under way which lead to an appreciation of nature. Curio cabinets and collections of the toys, the clothing and the common household objects of other peoples are also stimulating when missionary enterprises are under way.

Trips and excursions lead to valuable discussions and planning of activities. A trip to a library, where one sees books of Indian pictures and reads Indian stories,

a visit to a museum, where the class sees exhibits of Indian crafts, household utensils, and clothing, are natural roads to an interest in Indian life and fellowship with Indians. The teacher must make the trip specific in its appeal, or the impressions and stimulation to thought and activity will be scattered and confusing. On the trip attention should be centered on Indian materials, of course.

The teacher remembers that persons converse profitably only when there is something in the group life worthy of thought. She will seek to provide this necessary basis for her class. "Nothing can take the place of such informal and semiformal intercourse. School life of this type approximates in linguistic opportunity a full, rich, natural community life, and offers in addition the aid of an alert teacher ready to note the stage of progress attained by the pupils and competent to help them to improve."[2]

Reserving Opinion. When a problem arises or an idea is advanced, the teacher should reserve her own opinion or judgment until the children have a chance to give theirs. They are more likely to think and to give their honest opinions if the teacher trusts them to do so. They will be stimulated to converse with each other also.

Purposes and Methods of Using Conversation

A stenographic report of a class session will offer a basis for a discussion of the purposes and methods of using conversation.

We sang stanza two, No. 1, *Songs for Little People*.[3] The children then told of experiences which they had

[2] Annie E. Moore, *The Primary School*. Used by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.
[3] Danielson and Conant.

had in helping hurt children or in being gentle, kind, and loving in other ways.

John: Yesterday I was at the playground and a little girl climbed the ladder to go down the slide and just as she got to the top step she slipped and fell. I ran over there, but by the time I got there she had got up and the nurse was helping her.

Mary: A girl was hit in the head with a rock, and it knocked a hole in her head, so another girl took her to the teacher.

Leader: As I was coming over here I saw a child have a chance to be gentle and kind. He and his baby brother were running along and the baby fell and hurt his knee. Oh, how he did cry! The big brother helped him up so carefully, brushed off his knee and took him to his mother.

Jean: Our baby fell down the steps and I took him to mother. (The group then looked at Bida's picture of "Jesus and the Paralytic.")

Leader: Did you take your copy of this picture home and retell the story to mother? Did she like it? There are several children here who haven't been here before. I wonder if you would like to tell it to them. It is such a lovely story of Jesus helping. (Several children volunteered and one was chosen by the group to tell it.)

We sang, "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus" (stanza one).

Several children had brought pictures, a number of which were inappropriate, but from the ones they brought we chose mother, father, grandmother, doctor, and nurse as those who care for hurt children. The children placed and pasted these on the chart.

Leader: How shall we show that we know our

heavenly Father cares too? (No response.) Would a verse do?

Mary: We could put "Suffer little children," etc.

Leader: But would that fit?

John: No, how about "God is love"?

Jean: That doesn't sound right either.

John: Miss ——, what would you say?

Leader: How about "He careth for you"?

Ruth: That is the best one.

Maud: Write, "He careth for you."

(Reviewed ways in which the heavenly Father cares and named his helpers.)

Jean: He keeps us from being sicker if we are good; and if we are bad, he punishes us and we get sick.

Leader: I'm sure our heavenly Father doesn't punish us by making us sick. He loves us just as mother does, whether we're good or whether we're bad. Sometimes we do get sick when we do things that we should not, but that is our own fault, not the heavenly Father's. (Illustration, eating too much candy.)

Arthur: Who is God anyway? Is he living?

Sara: Of course he is living. Doesn't he take care of us?[4]

Arthur: Well, I wanted to know if he was living.

Leader: This story (referring to the picture) and chart reminds me of a song I heard you sing last year. (Sang "Friends," children joining in.)

Shall we show our chart during the fellowship? How shall we explain it? (A little girl explained it very well.)

I read a story of some twins who had a chance to help. Shall I tell it?

[4] Later the teacher introduced the children to experiences and materials which sought to give them a sense of God's reality.

Story: "How the Twins Helped," in the *Mayflower Program Book,* second year, by Perkins and Danielson. (This story furnishes examples of helpfulness by children.)

When I read that story it made me feel like helping too. Then I heard about a little boy here who cannot run about and play and swim. (Told of little boy who has hip-joint disease and is here to recuperate.)

John: Oh, I know him. He lives near me. He used to live in France, but the food was so bad they had to bring him here. I haven't ever been to see him, but I've seen him out on his porch.

Maud: We could go to see him, John.

John: Yes, we could.

Leader: Some of the children in the neighborhood could go to see him and tell him about the things they are doing.

Ruth: We could take him some flowers.

Jean: Yes, and I know; we cut out pictures and made a book for some sick people in my other Sunday school.

Leader: So you think he would like a scrapbook?

(The children decided to make the book. A number of pictures were spread on the floor and each child selected the one he thought the little boy would like best. They cut and pasted pictures on sheets of paper —each child planning one sheet.

The leader suggested that they might want to write the story of their picture. Most of the children were puzzled at first, but one child made up a very nice story. When she had finished, others decided that they would like to try. There was no time to complete the book, so we had to work on it at the next session.[5]

[5] Report of second grade.

Conversation to Recall and Report on Experiences. The first use of conversation in this recorded class session was for the recall and report on certain experiences. These experiences grew out of a desire to practice a solution of a problem discovered in the previous session. The "stage was set" in this case by a stanza of a song which had evidently been associated with the previous discussion. The teacher acted as one of the group and made her report along with the children's. Talking about experiences and helping to interpret them religiously, linking them up with the teachings of Jesus, is an important use of conversation.

Thinking Through New Problems. Not all of these experiences need be reports on previously solved problems. Sometimes new problems may arise. Sometimes the chance comes to solve a problem which the teacher has realized for some time must be faced and for which she has been awaiting a natural approach. One teacher faced such a situation. The grandparents of one of her little girls had been killed by an automobile. The home had been visited and the teacher had written a note to the child. It was evident that the child still had questions which the teacher wished to help her solve. The teacher did not wish to approach the question of death directly, as she thought that the indirect approach would be the more helpful one. Then one Sunday in spring the children came hungry to talk. The class session centered in plans for sharing Easter joys. The children began to tell of birds and new chickens that they had seen during the week. Usually, when children begin to talk of live things, the mention of death follows naturally, since they have seen birds and small animals dead and have accepted death as one fact of life. This was the approach for which the teacher had

hoped and the conversation very simply approached the subject of the never-ending care of the heavenly Father.

"Death was not dreadful at all," the teacher said, "since it merely meant that the heavenly Father was caring for his children in a new way. Of course we miss those who die, and are sorry not to have them with us any more," she said, "but the heavenly Father is still loving them and caring for them."

There was no mention of the grandparents, but the child's mother reported later that the little girl had said to her, "The heavenly Father is still caring for grandfather and grandmother. It is not so bad to die."

A teacher should always feel free to change her class plans to meet a vital problem when it arises naturally.

Thinking Through Conduct Problems. Often sharing the confidences of the children will bring conduct problems before the class which the teacher might not be able to introduce in any other way. A third grade was making a chart which recorded courageous deeds. There was a good deal of individual work involved, and as the teacher helped a boy to cut some letters for the heading, he asked, "Whose name are you going to put on the roll?" The teacher replied that she was going to put the name of a boy who had had to be brave to tell the truth, and stopped to tell the incident. Several children stopped their parts of the task to listen to the conversation at the table. A boy said, "That's what still bothers me, but I am going to come out on it." Then he told of an incident in which he had let another boy take the blame for breaking a window until the boy was rebuked and then he had owned up. "I was scared, though," he said. "Maybe I wouldn't tell next time." The teacher suggested that whenever he had to be brave

enough to tell the truth or to do any other hard thing pleasing to the heavenly Father, he could say a prayer just to himself asking the heavenly Father to make him brave, and that the heavenly Father would hear.

"Could you really do that?" a girl asked, and seemed relieved when the teacher assured her that you could. "I thought you just prayed at church and in the morning."

Notice another element in this incident. The members of a Primary class may work as individuals, or in a number of small groups as well as in one group. Then each little group will have its own conversation.

To Supply Social Motive for Activities. To return to the study of the conversation noted above, the teacher used conversation to supply a social motive for the recall of the Bible story associated with the conduct under especial consideration.

How Conversation Helps Children to Think. Conversation was introduced in making the chart planned for at the previous session and in judging the pictures for this chart. It was also used to help the children to think through the problem of how an acknowledgment of God's care might be included. Thinking is best done when a group realizes that it faces a difficulty which must be solved before the plans of the group can make further progress. Dewey calls this a "forked-road" situation. A class must make choices between alternative activities or must search for even better methods of solving the problem than the children know at present. Teachers should seek to help their classes face thoughtfully just such questions and should see to it that they are introduced to many thought-provoking choices in the course of the class session. A third grade was discussing the incident of a four-year-old child

looking at a beautiful sunset and wanting to write a letter to God and thank him.

"Mrs. S—— asked, 'If it had been your little sister, how would you have answered her?'

"Promptly Marian spoke up: 'She couldn't write to God because *he* is everywhere.'

"Gwendolyn suggested: 'A little of God is in everyone —in me and in her. Why couldn't she write her letter and then eat it?'

"Leonora interposed, 'She could think a letter like thoughts, then God would know how she felt no matter where she was.'

"The class agreed that this was the best way to let God know."[6]

Giving Information in Conversation. Notice that in the class session which we are studying the children used the teacher as a consultant when they realized that they did not know an appropriate verse to use. The teacher told them without further ado. Conversation is a method by which information may be given to children. Giving information is one of the teacher's legitimate functions, provided she is sure that the group cannot think the question through for themselves.

Discussing Religious Problems. Religious problems of children are uncovered in conversation. Two ideas of God, puzzling to one child and giving to another an unchristian idea of God, arose in this recorded conversation. The teacher gave in a tactful manner her own idea of God and sought to correct the unchristian idea of God which was introduced into the conversation by Jean.

Conversation Among the Children. The children were encouraged to talk to each other, answering each

[6] Reported by Anne S. Lee. Used by permission.

other's questions, judging each other's contributions, and suggesting activities. A conversation which provides for merely a teacher-to-children relation may be very worth while, but it has not yet made use of all the possibilities of conversation. In this recorded class session all the children were encouraged to talk, but it was not permitted that a few monopolize the period. Sometimes a very talkative child may be taught consideration by being made a partner in seeing that every child has a chance. Often a self-conscious child can be encouraged to talk by not being noticed too closely, or by being given some special responsibility before the class period, or through frequent intimate contacts with the teacher. Letting a few children do all the talking would be almost as regrettable a practice as for the teacher to do all the talking.

Treating Children's Ideas With Respect. The suggestions of the child for further activity were accepted by the group. "Something happens to boys and girls when they see their own ideas accepted or built upon and put into action. Many whole group or small group activities start from the children at unexpected times."[7] There is a distinct growth in a sense of one's own value to the group, in self-respect and in a desire to bear responsibility for the welfare of group plans. Teachers of the Christian religion, a religion which places supreme value upon personality, will realize how important this nurturing of personality is.

Discussing Methods of Carrying Out Plans. Another use made of conversation was to discuss the methods of carrying out the plans determined on by the group, in

[7] *Curriculum Making in the Elementary School*, by the Staff of the Elementary Division of the Lincoln School, Teachers College, Columbia University. Used by permission of Ginn and Company, publishers.

this case the making of a scrapbook. Opinions were given regarding the best pictures, the test being what the little boy would choose, an excellent test from the Christian viewpoint. The children were also helped to express themselves creatively through stories woven around the pictures. The construction of the book was determined.

Methods Used by the Teacher in Guiding Conversation

Asking Good Questions. The methods used in guiding the conversation should be studied. First, the teacher used good questions. The questions were thought-provoking, the children having to come to some decision, recall some experience, or suggest some plan in order to answer them. Questions which could be answered thoughtlessly by "Yes" or "No" and questions which stated the teacher's point of view and which the children could accept without thought were avoided.

Giving Information. Second, the teacher gave information whenever it seemed necessary. She neither expected the children to make all the contributions nor to think without stimulation and assistance.

Avoiding Trivialities. Third, she avoided trivialities. The children were not allowed merely to chatter. When they had reached a point in the conversation at which it was no longer profitable to continue a topic, a new one was introduced. Of course, a teacher should be careful at this point to judge between chatter and some seemingly irrelevant remark which really is a child's indirect approach to the class problem.

Stimulating Thought. Fourth, the teacher used certain materials to stimulate thought, introducing them naturally when there was need of an additional spur

to group thought. Conversation centered around the enjoyment of a picture. A hymn was used worshipfully in connection with the retelling of a Bible story. Manual activities were used and a story and an incident were introduced to start an activity connected with the problem before the group.

Other Uses of Conversation

Conversation is also used in picture studies, in the study of nature and missionary objects and for the definite purpose of gaining adequate information in order to think through a problem or carry out a plan. After a picture study of a boy packing a Thanksgiving basket, a Primary class decided to ask the matron of the near-by Children's Home to come and tell them how they could give the children at the Home a good Thanksgiving. A note was written inviting her. On the next Sunday the matron was present. "This friend, Miss ——, knows that you have many questions to ask about our friends at the Children's Home, and about how you can help to make them happy at Thanksgiving," said the teacher. The questions came thick and fast. How did the children sleep? Where did they go to school? What did they play? At this point the matron told about some ponies that had been given to the children, and all possible feeling of superiority vanished as one city-cooped child asked, "Do you really think that we might see them?" The matron assured them that they might not only see them but to stop at the Home some time when they were out riding and that they might be allowed to ride about the yard. Then there were brisk questions about what to send to the Home, and why their offering was needed. After the session the teacher remarked to the superintendent, "They asked

as intelligent questions as I could have asked, and they found out just what they wanted to know." Teachers need to train themselves to let children do their own thinking and manage their own affairs so far as possible.

To Summarize. Conversation may be used to further the religious experience of children in both the class session and the department by building up a fellowship, by stimulating thought, by guiding purposes and plans, by giving information, and by interpreting activities and discussions religiously.

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For Study

1. If possible have a stenographic report made of your next class session. Criticize your use of conversation in this report.

2. After three weeks, have another report of your class session. What changes can you note in your methods of using conversation and discussion? Do you know better how to lead children to think for themselves and to plan worthily? Continue to make records at intervals to judge your own growth in skill.

3. Review Chapter IV. How does conversation help a group to develop each step in a complete act of learning?

4. If the teacher's book which you use gives reports of how the materials were used study several of these experimental reports and note the methods used.

What Would You Do?

1. A second grade was learning of ways in which God's children work together. In the midst of the enterprise there was an attempted robbery at the church and the woodwork in the department room was defaced, the birthday bank was found with the loot and held for evidence. On the following Sunday the children could talk of nothing else.

John said, "I think the robber ought to be killed."

Owen said, "I do too."

Should the teacher change her plans to fit the situation? How could she use this negative example to help the children realize what happens when even one individual refuses to co-operate with others? How can she help John to take a more Christian attitude to the malefactor without arbitrarily substituting her opinion for his?

2. Hubert at seven was a constant disturber, a confirmed practical joker, and was forbidden even on the lawns of his neighbors. His propensity to tease was quite evident in class. How can his teacher help Hubert to realize his lack of co-operation? Can the other members of the class be of any assistance to Hubert? What will probably be the result of calling constant attention to his behavior?

CHAPTER XI

USING PICTURES TO HELP CHILDREN LEARN

Introductory Study

1. List the methods for using pictures to be found in your teacher's and pupil's materials for one group of lessons.

2. Show a child "Sir Galahad," by Watts, "Can't You Talk?" by Holmes, and "The Sistine Madonna," by Rafael. Record exactly why he prefers one picture to the others. After reading this chapter see if you can determine reasons for his choice.

The Pictures Primary Children Like

Familiar Pictures. In a certain picture test conducted in eight Primary groups, it was found that ninety per cent of the children's first choices were pictures with which they had become acquainted at school or in their own homes. One group at first enjoyed "Can't You Talk?" by Holmes, in preference to every other picture. Yet the group deserted this picture for Millet's "Feeding Her Birds," giving as their reason that they knew it so well. One child said, "We had stories about this one at school." He showed a sense of power because of his ability to recognize the picture in a new setting. Then the teachers giving the test used picture studies, and after an interval allowed once more for choice. They found that the meaning given by the picture studies influenced the choices of the children.

So we see that the Primary child's interests in pictures have the same basis as his interests in stories or poems, that is, they are determined largely by his past and present experiences. When a child looks at a picture, he does not ask whether it is great art, but he does ask that it make certain appeals. Above everything else he wishes it to connect pleasantly with his own experience. Because meaning lends value to pictures for children, the church-school teacher should help the children to build pleasurable associations with great religious pictures.

Pictures of Animals. A little girl seeing Watt's "Sir Galahad," said, "I do like this picture because I like horses so well. Last summer I rode a horse at my grandmother's." A boy in the third grade exclaimed, "Now, don't you think that white horse is good?" The same response came from children in another class who studied the picture with keen interest because of the horse. Knighthood seems not to have "flowered" for Primary children!

Pictures With Clear Details. Two pictures of sheep were shown, one a photograph in which the sheep were well in the foreground and the other a beautiful painting of a herd of sheep coming through some autumn woods. The children immediately discarded the painting for the photograph. Jean said, pointing to the painting, "Why, you hardly would know that they were sheep." Children can understand a picture so much more easily when it is clear in outline and uncrowded with detail.

Pictures With Action. Children usually like pictures with action. Landscapes, unless they show some movement of wind or water, usually do not appeal to children as much as landscapes which are settings for persons

or animals. Portraits also do not make an appeal to young children, for the figure merely sits, saying and doing nothing. In fact, the picture to be interesting to children must speak a language. The comic supplements, with all their vulgarities, are interesting to children because they have action and story value, and many of them carry color. So they furnish a form of story. Regrettable as their constant reading seems to the trained worker, she cannot hope to combat this practice unless she can get parents to furnish a substitute of a similar type, but of a more desirable character.

Pictures Which Tell Stories. Children usually expect to find stories in pictures. Show them a picture which has story value like Von Bremen's "The Pet Bird," or Copping's "Jesus Teaching in a Boat," and they immediately begin making up stories about it and attributing emotions to the persons in the picture.

Pictures of Babies and Children. Primary children like pictures of babies, and of other children, both children like themselves and those in other lands. If a Primary child has or wants a baby brother or sister, he is sure to be interested in the Madonna pictures and in other pictures of little children. Sometimes he will ask the teacher to enjoy the picture with him. A very tender confiding of his joy and pride in the baby at home will follow.

Pictures of Unfamiliar Life. Curiosity also adds to interest in a picture. Bible and missionary pictures appeal to children because of this interest in the new. Blum, "The Candy Vender," is a picture which appeals both to the child's sense of recognition and to his curiosity. One second-grade class showed intense interest in this picture. One of the boys said, "Now, that is what I call a good picture." Pictures like Bida's

"Jesus and the Paralytic" arouse genuine interest by their unfamiliar elements and story value. In discussing the picture interests of Primary children, one cannot make sweeping statements, for there will always be certain children who differ from their groups. Perhaps they are children who are more keenly sensitive or who are better trained artistically or who observe details more accurately than the average child. When the Primary class mentioned above was shown the two sheep pictures, most of the children preferred the photograph. But one child looked at the painting thoughtfully. Then he said, showing that he appreciated its lovely perspective, "I like this one best. You can see so far."

Pictures to Withhold From Children

Those That Arouse Terror or Repulsion. Children should be safeguarded from those religious pictures which are outside of their natural experience and understanding and which may arouse their terror or repulsion. For this reason pictures such as Doré's "The Deluge," or Rubens' "The Descent from the Cross," are not suitable in a Primary Department. Neither are pictures of Jesus which make him seem unnatural or effeminate.

It is not wise to subject Primary children to gruesome pictures of need in order to make a missionary appeal vivid. A teacher should not show the famine pictures from China and India or Red Cross pictures of hurricane or earthquake sufferers. These are pictures intended for adults. Because of their repulsive elements they will probably hinder rather than develop a desire to be friends to those in need. Pictures that arouse contempt for other peoples are to be avoided.

Pictures of idol-worship and of repulsive living conditions in other lands or among other races are examples of this type.

Those Too Advanced. Pictures which are beyond a child's natural interest should not be forced upon him. If he is introduced by overzealous parents or teachers to pictures whose subjects are beyond his comprehension, he will even learn a repulsion toward a great masterpiece. Whatever a child likes to hear and read or look at in real life, that he enjoys in a picture. Even great pictures are likely to become most commonplace and to fail in their proper appeal later when the child is old enough to appreciate them. This is true of pictures of knighthood. Pictures of the crucifixion and most of the resurrection pictures are unsuitable because they treat subjects too advanced emotionally for Primary children.

Symbolic Pictures. Symbolic pictures, like certain pictures of Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt's "Light of the World," and even some of the very charming symbolic pictures of Margaret Tarrant, such as "All Things Bright and Beautiful," fall into the class of unsuitable symbolic pictures. They are confusing when used for teaching purposes. Using a nonsymbolic picture symbolically is to be avoided also. One of the most common examples of this is the use of pictures of Oriental shepherds to depict "Jesus, the Good Shepherd." In choosing pictures for Primary children the points to keep in mind are a knowledge of the children's interests and needs, the aim for the session, and the child's lack of emotional development.

Purposes and Methods of Using Pictures

Preparation for Prayer. A Primary teacher had used

the picture "Moonlight," by Jessie Willcox Smith, with a story of a little boy who studied the stars and watched with pleasure the yellow pathway of the moon across the waters. This material was used in a group of lessons which interpreted Summer Joys religiously. After showing the picture, the teacher knew by the expression of the children's faces that the group was ready for worship. So the prayer which followed grew out of a real desire to pray.

Sometimes pictures suggest to children posture proper in prayer. Storch's "Child at Prayer" had this effect upon a little girl who had not learned to assume a reverent posture in prayer. She studied the picture and then said to her mother, "I know now how to do when I pray; wait, I'll show you"—and brought Storch's "Child at Prayer."

When using pictures to lead to prayer the teacher should be careful not to say too much. Sometimes just sitting in silence and looking at the picture is enough. At other times, especially when a Bible picture with unfamiliar elements is used, the class should be free to ask questions about its details. Often a picture is misunderstood because of a puzzling detail.

In Teaching Songs. Pictures are used in teaching songs. Often the pictures make clear for the child both the emotional background of the song and the word pictures which its stanzas describe. We refer the reader to Chapter IX, page 186, for an example of this method.

Information and Contact With Other Peoples. Pictures give children information and a broader social experience. Accurate and artistic photographs of Bible lands and of scenes in other lands are very valuable. It is hard for a child of the western world to understand how a man could be let down through a roof or a guest

room could be built upon one until he has seen a picture of an Oriental house. A picture can give him accurate information at a glance which a teacher could not possibly furnish through a lengthy explanation.

Pictures broaden the experiences of children not only because they give information, but also because they arouse feeling. A group of Primary children after picture studies of some of the scenes of Jesus' life should have a much more appreciative attitude toward Jesus. Pictures can also help children to understand the difficulties and needs of other children.

To Start the Class Planning. Pictures are used to suggest activities to children. One class that was abusing the departmental room was shown a picture of a Primary group taking care of their room. Through a study of this picture, the children were helped to change their attitude of abuse to one of care and responsibility.

A second grade carried a Thanksgiving basket to a Children's Home. They were welcomed and shown through the building. In the kindergarten there was a large copy of the Sistine "Madonna." The class was discussing its trip on the following Sunday and the mention of the Sistine "Madonna" led naturally into the Christmas plans.

To Help Carry Out Plans. Pictures help in carrying out plans. A group wishes to make a health scrapbook to send to a Chinese Day Nursery. They are led to think of their subject and select pictures to use in it.

Patricia wanted to make a departmental valentine for the pastor, so her teacher consented for her to ask all the teachers and children in the department if they would sign the valentine. She chose from the supply of papers a delicate shade of pink and cut a heart double. Some time later her teacher noticed that she

was looking through the file of pictures but without seeming success.

"What is it, Patricia?" asked the teacher. "May I help?"

"Oh, I am looking so hard, but I cannot find what I want," was the reply. "I want a picture of some flowers with a tiny pink line around it just the color of this paper."

"We have some unclipped magazines in the storeroom," the teacher suggested.

So Patricia continued her search. Betsy went to help her. At the next session the two little girls came to the teacher in triumph, showing a picture outlined in just the right color. It proved the finishing touch for the valentine. The other members of their class had become very much interested in the valentine and were the first children to sign it. This activity was not separate from the regular class work. The entire class was working along similar lines, but the children were allowed freedom to work on plans most interesting to them so long as they were worth while.

Pictures also help children to carry out their plans by suggesting new ideas or ways of acting or by suggesting conduct problems or ways to solve them. These pictures are especially good in stimulating class discussion.

To Uncover Children's Religious Ideas. The children were busily at work on plans to care for the church. The teacher told the story of how Samuel helped Eli. She showed the Wyeth picture, "Samuel and Eli," published in Good Housekeeping in 1929.

"I am glad to see that picture," said Carroll. "I've always wanted to see what God looked like!"

There was a discussion of the picture through recall

of the story. The teacher said that no one knew just what God looked like, so there were no pictures of God. One child suggested that God was a spirit and you couldn't draw a picture of a spirit. Out of this incident grew a number of lessons which sought to develop Christian ideas of God.

To Recall Experiences. After Easter some third-grade teachers place pictures from the life of Jesus on their tables and ask the children to arrange them roughly according to the incidents in his life. This method also helps the children to clear any misconceptions about Jesus which they may have acquired.

Not only may pictures be used to recall informational or story material, but they may also be used to recall class plans and activities growing out of them. Some teachers in September use their picture sets to help the class relive the year's plans and activities. This method often stimulates further activities and is a good approach to the new grade.

Picture Posing. In the third grade "The Good Samaritan," by Moore, was posed one Sunday at the children's suggestion. So interested did one boy become in catching exactly the pose of the Good Samaritan that several times he studied the picture closely. When his time came finally to pose, his face was a perfect copy of the sympathetic face of the Samaritan.

Once in a Vacation Church School, the leader asked the children what kind of a program they would like to prepare for their parents. One child suggested that they sing the hymn, "Oh, Come, Let Us Worship." Another child suggested that they pose the picture of "The Angelus." Both song and picture had been used in a worship service. They were asked, "But how can you choose the children to pose this picture?" Dorothy

suggested that several pairs of children try to pose the picture and then the group decide on which couple did the best. Two children were finally chosen.

"Why do you think they do better than the others?" the teacher asked.

The answers were: "They looked like they were hearing the bell." "They looked like they were praying." Picture posing should be as spontaneous as these two examples. Too many suggestions from the teacher spoil the spontaneity of the children. The children try to show the emotional message of the picture so far as they see it, if they are let alone, or suitable music is used, or a very few questions stimulate them to think.

Picture Programs. A picture program may be suggested to the children as a form of Christmas entertainment for another group. The pictures may be shown, then the children may find materials which perfectly correlate with each one. In this way a spontaneous Christmas pageant may be developed. For example, Plockhorst's "Annunciation to the Shepherds" may be shown and the second and third stanzas of "Wind Through the Olive Trees" may be sung softly. Then "Away in a Manger" may be sung or recited and Lerolle's "Arrival of the Shepherds" may be shown. This may be followed by "Silent Night," played instrumentally, and Correggio's "Holy Night" may be shown. Edelfelt's "The Adoration of the Wise Men" may be displayed and "We Three Kings of the Orient Are" sung by the teacher. A modern picture of children sharing Christmas gifts may be used while the children sing "Carol, Children, Carol." A program like this was once developed by a third grade when the Primary superintendent asked the class to help plan the Christmas program for their parents.

Department Activities. Pictures may be used to "set the stage" for major departmental activities. Note how pictures were used in Chapter III to begin the reception for the Japanese dolls.

General Rules. The best method to help children appreciate a great painting is to give them sympathetic companionship in studying it. Call their attention to a permanent picture and let them feel that you too are moved by the picture. This is a sure method of adding to the picture's value. Sometimes a teacher can suggest a careful study of a picture by her own appreciation.

Many a child who understands the main elements of a picture may be puzzled by a confusing detail. A six-year-old, seeing Mauve's "Return to the Fold," exclaimed, "Oh, that man is going to take the sheep right into the river!" Looking at the picture in surprise, his friend noted that the sunset did give the effect of a river. She was able to calm the child's terror at the idea of the poor sheep being led to their doom.

When selecting a picture the leader should keep in mind the size of her class. There surely must be nothing more exasperating to Primary children than to have the teacher talk about a picture when the picture is so small that only a very few children in the group can examine it with any pleasure, or when a few members of the class are allowed to monopolize it. Primary children, though they seem sometimes quite large, are still just one step removed from the beginner, who almost has to "see" pictures with his hands to appreciate them.

Taking Care of Pictures

Permanent Pictures. Care of the large teaching sets which accompany many of the Primary courses is im-

portant, as they are valuable and usually rather expensive. If these are to be mounted, the best mounting is some appropriately colored matstock. Usually, the neutral tints—sand, brown, gray, gray-green—are used. The mountings should extend two inches beyond the picture. Some Primary workers have found it advisable not to paste the picture upon the mount, but to make two slits crosswise at each corner of the mount and slip each corner of the picture into a slit. The same mounting can then be used for a number of pictures. When the teacher is not using a picture in her teaching set, she should be careful to place it in the envelope. Then complete sets of pictures are always on hand.

Many of the teaching pictures are large enough to be used with the department also. To use them only for class purposes is to limit their effectiveness. A class should feel free to contribute a study of a picture to the department program. Then the picture may be given a place of honor where the entire department can see it.

Large Seasonal Pictures. There are certain beautiful seasonal pictures which are so large that framing them would be prohibitive. A good way to keep these pictures is to mount on veneer board and shellac the face of the picture with clear shellac. Then the picture looks like a beautiful oil painting. The picture must be very wet before it is glued to the veneer board. It should be placed when mounted under weights until it is thoroughly dry. The shellac should be applied with an even stroke from a very clean brush. If veneer board cannot be obtained, very heavy smooth cardboard sheeting may be used. There is more danger of warping, however.

One rural school purchased the wooden grapefruit

boards with sloping edge which are on sale at Kresge stores. A picture was mounted on the circle in the center of each board. When it was dry it was shellacked. In this way a set of lovely permanent pictures was secured for this Primary class which had little money. The children enjoyed helping.

Filing Pictures. Pictures clipped from magazines may be filed in the cardboard brief cases which are on sale at the five-and-ten-cent store. They may be sorted under headings such as "Babies," "Home Life," "Child Activities," and so on. Regular letter files can be used, but the brief case is to be preferred because it protects from dust. A teacher who is blessed with a steel or wooden filing cabinet should consider herself most fortunate. Most Primary superintendents and teachers, however, will have to care for their pictures in simpler ways. The children, especially the third grade, should be encouraged to help with the filing. The entire group should learn to search the files for pictures needed in carrying out their purposes.

Pupils' Folders. Extra pupils' folders make an excellent source of pictures and should be filed with care. The children may be led to search them for pictures.

Frame For Temporary Pictures. There is an open metal frame for use in showing temporary pictures to children. It shows the picture to a better advantage and teaches a proper respect for it. Teachers who have separate classrooms or a special corner in the department room find these helpful. The frame is sold by the Art Extension Society, Westport, Connecticut, for $1.50.

Pictures That Children Make

Drawing a Natural Activity. Drawing is a very natural form of expression for Primary children, espe-

cially for the younger ones. They draw or paint in the real play spirit, and are closely akin to the little child who reads his stories from pictures. The children have now passed beyond the kindergarten, where the sheer joy of handling and using materials was so great that the child cared very little about whether the drawing was a picture or not. Now, in the Primary age, they do, and their drawings are dramatic; they depict life. They are records of experiences which the child considers worth while or they are attempts to gain a clearer mastery of an experience.

How Children Learn Through Drawing. A child does not get an idea and then express it, as teachers have sometimes thought. The idea which is his in part becomes fully his own by the very activity of drawing or of working it out through some other process. "Drawing should be at first a means for re-enforcing or dwelling upon some interesting life experience of the child."[1] "We cannot speak of an idea and its expression. The expression is more than the mode of conveying an already formed idea, it is a part and a half of its formation."[2] When we realize the full force of these quotations, we become conscious that the spontaneous drawings of children are a vital part of their learning.

Primary children paint boldly in the large. They are interested in the object only because of the part that it plays in their experience. Objects which they consider of major importance will loom large and in the foreground of the picture, out of proportion to the other figures. A very large apple on a very small tree is to be expected from a first-grade child. Objects will often

[1] John Dewey, *The Psychology of Drawing.* Used by permission of Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University.
[2] John Dewey, *Imagination and Expression.* Used by permission of Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University.

be repeated. This is the true spirit of creativeness, for those who create are always interested not only in the object, but in the way they feel about it. A Primary teacher is wasting time who insists that the children work for the finished product and who gives them so much help and direction that the children become dull copyists. The way they feel about experiences may be permanently blocked.

In spite of all that has been said above, even a younger Primary child's drawing often portrays to sympathetic eyes what it is supposed to represent. Watching children draw happily and freely the teacher sees an idea take form; even in a few cases of gifted children, will catch the child's emotional reaction. Once a child who had been in the country wanted to show what she had enjoyed most. She drew a picture of a bird flying home in the twilight and the teacher really caught the feeling of the coming dark.

Helping Children to Make Pictures

Suggesting a Recall of Pleasant Experiences. Teachers can help children to recall their pleasurable experiences and can suggest to them that they draw them. A first grade was talking of summer experiences.

"Why don't you draw some pictures of these lovely places and things?" the teacher suggested. "Perhaps the other children would like to see the drawings."

The children went happily to work. Shirley drew a round red ball up in one corner of the paper. Then she drew a line across the paper and began to make semicircles each adjoining the next and of different colors.

"They are rainbows on the sidewalk," she explained, "and the sun has come out."

It was not hard for any city dweller to see the little

iridescent pools of water. After the pictures were completed and enjoyed, the teacher told how she always remembered that it was God who gave us all things richly to enjoy. A worship experience followed. The teacher had helped to add worshipful meaning to daily life—a most important aim in the religious teaching of children.

We are told that a child best understands God when he has had an opportunity to act in godlike ways. Surely, a child who has had a chance to create out of his own experience is better able to understand God, the Creator. When the Primary children make blueprint pictures and are still filled with the wonder of creation and with the sense of power which achievement gives them, one teacher reads Genesis 1. 1 to them and the class sings together "God's Love."

Arouse Purpose. A second grade wanted to make a moving picture of "The Little Hiawatha" for a mother's party. They had been absorbed by an Indian Missionary enterprise and the picture "Hiawatha," by Norris, suggested the moving picture. They were familiar with the poem at public school.

"I'll draw it," said James.

"Which part of it?" asked the teacher.

"All," was the answer.

And he literally proceeded to draw a poem in sequence until the roll of manila paper looked like a tapestry, celebrating an epic. From time to time he called on other children to help. A really co-operative enterprise developed. The teacher and the children at times made suggestions when the picture seemed bare in detail. Then the children would consult books, pictures, and objects to check on their work. The teacher read Myall's "Lullaby," beginning "Hushaby, lullaby, little

papoose," while the group was resting. The work was a natural part of several sessions. Continued effort is important if children are really to put their best into what they are doing. Teachers often hold children to work too trivial to challenge real thought because they limit the entire production to one very short teaching period. A teacher helps a child to express himself creatively through art when she gives him motives for drawing.

Motive can also be aroused by suggesting that the children decorate the room. A Primary teacher suggested that the room was bare; that it should be made pretty for the new children who would soon be promoted into the department. The superintendent had asked the class to be responsible. Several boys thought that the windows should be washed and undertook the task. Another group worked on a border. Some of this was imitative work and some creative. Certainly, their arrangement was original. Two boys asked if they might make an autumn picture. They worked in water color and from week to week added bits from what they saw during the week. The teacher was called in often as a consultant, but the work was their own. At times they had troubles with colors. The teacher, who was not an artist, asked help of a public-school art teacher, a member of the church, and the difficulty was overcome. There is always value in using as special consultants persons who know more about a special problem than the teacher.

The children were allowed to work in the medium which they chose themselves. Matilda had no desire to draw, to paint, to clean, or to work on a border. She told the teacher that she wanted to make a vase for the superintendent's table by a new method learned at

school. Her contribution was welcomed and the vase filled a real need throughout the year. The teacher encouraged the children to correct their own mistakes. The two boys who were painting the autumn scene made numerous corrections.

At another time the third grade was making a bird chart. One child wanted to add a picture of a robin on a nest. He showed signs of being puzzled.

"I just can't remember how the mother bird sits, way up high or down flat," he said.

The teacher suggested that he go quietly and look at a robin on her nest under the eaves of a house across the street. He came back and completed his picture with satisfaction. Of course every Primary class has not a nesting robin in easy reach, but the group's very interest in this one had led to the chart. Probably the class will have many interesting resources at its command if the teacher will look for them and help the children to use them.

Principles Regarding Children's Creativeness. We must remember that a child does not create out of nothingness. The rule suggested in the creation of poems holds good here also. First there must be the meaningful situation, then the child's response to it, and finally the worshipful meaning given to the whole. For this reason teachers should provide meaningful experiences for their children. One spring a Primary class went for a walk each Sunday for several weeks, watching for new flowers, the new birds. This fitted in with their plans and had a rightful place in the class session. How the children grew in appreciation! Spring hymns and Bible verses took on new meaning. There were many worth-while creative efforts as a result.

Practices Which Hinder Creative Expression

Cut-Out Work. There are some practices which teachers must avoid in order to release children to do their best work. One of these practices is the use of the outline, so called "handwork or cut-out card." The children are given the card and are told to color it. This work requires no thought. It is not likely to lead to appreciation or to worship and is so trivial that it may cause children to connect cheapness with the church school.

A Primary superintendent once remarked: "I never have any trouble with my children. I have a cut-out picture for each child every Sunday and a package of crayons. They get their work from the secretary as they come in and they are no trouble at all."

"What else do you do?" she was asked.

"Oh, nothing. The children just love it," she replied.

Imagine children who are supposed to learn to think, feel, and act according to Christian teachings and to find fellowship with the heavenly Father wasting their time Sunday after Sunday for three years coloring silly little cut-out pictures! Unless a form of drawing can be justified as making a real contribution to a child's religious life and as having a natural place in class teaching, teachers are unwise, if they include it.

Slavish Use of Patterns and Too Many Directions. Telling children exactly what to draw is another practice to avoid. Naturally, all children are not aroused to master the same ideas even by the same experience. To expect them to react alike is to crush their genuine response and to make them conform to a set rule.

Following patterns slavishly will never teach children

sincerely to express themselves through drawing. There is a legitimate use of the pattern when children are working for finished products. Probably in the past teachers have been entirely too bound by the pattern to be helpful to children. This use has been discussed under types of activity in Chapter VI.

Challenge Children to Do Better Work. Children should not be allowed to stay on the same level nor draw the same thing over and over. Sometimes first-grade children will be so absorbed by one experience that they make no progress at all in learning meaning from other experiences. One child drew Santa Claus whenever he was left free to draw for months before Christmas. The leader suggested that she liked his pictures of Santa, that she enjoyed Old Santa. Then she asked, "But don't you have happy times and do nice things except at Christmas?" After this conference, there was a noticeable broadening of the child's interests.

A Drawing Not a Mere Purposeless Expression. The teacher avoids thinking that the child's drawings are merely "expressions" of the "impressions" that a story, poem, or activity has made. We refer once more to the quotations on page 226. Neither should she expect children to create the pictures of Bible scenes out of their own imagination. Children should have access to pictures, books, and objects in order to develop accurate ideas of life in other lands or times. Museums and libraries offer valuable background materials for such work. When this approach is made, the teacher comes to realize from the experiences of her group the truth of the quotation from Doctor Dewey.

Not an Art Teacher, But a Teacher of Religion. In all her stimulation of children to become creative through art, the teacher must ever keep before her the

fundamental rule that she is not an art teacher, but a teacher of religion; that she uses this method just as she does any other to help children act according to social motives, to gain information of value to them religiously or to lead them into genuinely worshipful experiences. Only by keeping this rule in mind is she able to make the religious contribution to the child's life through the use of art which any good church-school teacher wishes to make.

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For Study

1. (1) Secure LeRolle, "The Arrival of the Shepherds." (2) Observe closely all the details of this picture. Try to master all the details. Turn the picture face downward and see if you can recall its details. (3) Ask yourself these questions: (*a*) Where is the center of interest in this picture? (*b*) How does the artist make it evident? (*c*) Who are the chief persons? (*d*) What emotions are expressed by the attitudes of the shepherds? of Mary? of Joseph? (*e*) What do you feel as you study the picture?

2. Study the picture "Rebekah at the Well," Cabanel. Give three reasons why this picture is interesting to Primary children.

3. Select one picture from your own teaching set. Write a plan for using it in (*a*) worship or (*b*) suggesting activity; or (*c*) sympathetic understanding of another people.

4. Write a story to use with one of the following pic-

tures: Meunier, "Robin Redbreast," or Breton, "Song of the Lark," or Tissot, "The Triumphal Entry."

For Further Study

1. Use the Bailey Art Studies in the Life of Christ as a basis for a departmental study of art appreciation.

2. Use Caffin, "How to Study Pictures," and Oliver, "First Steps in the Enjoyment of Pictures," for a more extended course.

What Would You Do?

1. A teacher was helping her Primary group to make scrapbooks for a Korean Primary school. The missionary was a friend of the group and had asked the children to make the books for use in geography work. The teacher suggested that each child choose a topic such as "How Americans Live," "Our Games," and so on. She referred the class to magazines from which pictures illustrating the topics might be secured. The children wanted to draw the pictures themselves. What would you do? Work for a finished product or let the children follow their own inclination? Which plan would be more helpful religiously? Should the fact that easily understood pictures of American life were needed in Korea be considered? How can the teacher lead the children to make their own decision?

2. Angelina was six and new to the Primary group. Early one Sunday her teacher found her waiting at the class table. The teacher began to explain about different things in the room and the two went on a tour. Finally they stopped before a colored copy of "Christ and the Doctors." "There's Santa Claus," said Angelina, pointing with evident pride to a crimson-robed aged rabbi. She seemed very happy over being able to make

a contribution. How would you help Angelina to appreciate this permanent picture and at the same time avoid crushing her dawning sense of "belonging"? Does her remark indicate a possible need of other members of the first grade?

3. What would you do when each child in the class wanted to "hold" the picture for the others?

4. William had just heard the story of the "Guest Room for Elisha." "I can't see how they could put a room on a roof," he said, "unless they did it like this" —and he drew a picture of a house with a peaked roof and a little room on one end very like a chimney. How could a picture study help William?

CHAPTER XII

WORSHIP, THE CLIMAX OF RELIGIOUS TEACHING

Introductory Study

1. Under what conditions have you most truly worshiped?

2. How do you lead your class to pray?

3. Discuss this quotation, "Every experience of life is religious to a person who has fellowship with God."[1]

Worship and the Christian Life

Worship, a sense of the fellowship of God, or, as Brother Lawrence puts it, "practicing the presence of God," cannot be limited to singing, praying, giving money, and using the Scriptures devotionally. These practices are just the crowning steps in worship. Doing the will of God is worship if the activity is undertaken because it will help to contribute to the purposes of God. The daily task is worship when one tries to do it to the glory of God.

"Worship has to do with 'utmosts'; the utmost good and your utmost relation to it. . . . When you face the problem of the meaning of life, and your deepest self reaches out toward whatever is the deepest value of all, you worship."[2]

Study is worship when God is found through study. "In defense of the active life it will be said that every

[1] A. J. W. Myers, *What Is Religious Education?* Used by permission of The National Sunday School Union, London.

[2] From a speech by George A. Coe in Chicago on December 5, 1929.

interest and concern of a truly Christian life is a form of worship. The arbitrary division between worship and work may be dismissed as an artificial distinction; useful, as all our categories are useful, to enable us to make our way through the world."[3]

There is no sharp division between secular and religious for the person who seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, since the desires to serve God and to live in his presence control every act. Apply this principle to the work of a Primary class. Worship becomes the climax of each teaching unit and of many of its steps taken from Sunday to Sunday.

In working with others in class, department, or school and getting a sense of "otherness" while doing so, the Primary children are taking natural steps toward God. In fact, Sperry states that for us all building up this sense of "others" is the first step in worship.

"Becoming one with . . . the object of our interest or loyalty we advance farther in our experience of religion's way, until finally there comes a moment when suddenly we say, 'Surely God is in this place and I knew it not.' No other word will do, and no other account of what has happened is enough. And then it is that we see what religion is all about."[4]

Probably the entire program of the Primary Department will in time be reorganized to bring the relation of the different parts of the program more and more in line with this point of view.

Religious Teaching One Process

At one time religious teachers divided their task neatly into three large divisions: giving knowledge,

[3] William L. Sperry, *Reality in Worship.* Used by permission of The Macmillan Company.
[4] *Ibid.*

training in worship, and guiding conduct. Each step was considered by itself, practically unrelated to the other steps. There was little effort to make any connection between worship, knowledge, and activities or conduct when programs were planned and methods and materials were chosen. Now church-school teachers still try to accomplish these three aims, but with this important difference in their point of view. All three aims are regarded as connected parts of a whole and are unified around the objective of causing a child to grow more and more into a disciple of Jesus, thinking, feeling, and acting more in keeping with his teachings. Since the point of view has changed, the program has changed too. Teachers now try to plan to have worship, instruction, and activity related to each other and form parts of one piece of learning. There is also an increasing effort in some churches to have one program for an age group and not several separate programs carried on by the missionary societies or the vacation school or the Sunday school or some other organizations.

Worship, One Step in Religious Teaching. A knowledge of the laws of learning also causes teachers to realize that it is impossible completely to divide teaching into separate steps. They know that a child gets knowledge and practice in conduct as two parts of the same learning. Also he feels about what he is doing or learning and so develops an attitude toward it or because of it. In other words, if instruction is truly religious, it is accompanied by worship and is learned only when it is put into practice.

Steps Toward a Unified Program. Worship is not confined to a worship service separated from the other activities of the department, but is expected as an accompaniment of any religious teaching. It comes

naturally in the midst of class thinking and doing. The teacher who is sensitive to her children's emotional responses knows when a moment of worship may bring her class period to a genuine religious climax.

Teachers do not continue to divide the Sunday-morning session into class session and worship periods entirely unrelated to each other in emphasis. There is teaching of the entire group, for at times the department naturally plans, purposes, and carries out its plans as one large group. On the other hand, a genuinely religious class session usually includes a time of worship. The teachers watch for problems and ideas arising in the departmental worship and help to work them out in the class. The departmental leader through a knowledge of what is going on in the classes gives to class plans added religious meaning through the worship service.

This unity of the entire program is one of the most important changes from the older form of teaching. Naturally, when imparting knowledge was considered the main work of the teacher, the activity was largely hers. There was little arousing of worshipful emotions on the part of the children. Just as logically when religious education is defined as guiding children in the doing of the will of God, their sense of his presence will be keen.

Worship in the Class Session

The Place of Worship. Greater emphasis is placed on worship in the class session. A second grade was working on favors for a party that they were going to give for the first grade. The teacher spoke of how God was pleased when his children worked for the happiness of others.

"Would you like to tell him about our party?" she asked.

"Yes," was the answer.

So, sitting on the floor of their classroom, the children had a genuine prayer experience.

One Sunday morning a third grade was learning some South American games on the lawn of the church. There was a lull in the play and the teacher suggested a return to the Primary room, for the children were tired. When they were seated around their table, the teacher spoke of how the heavenly Father loved all children and wanted them to be happy. As she talked, she realized that the children were ready for prayer.

"What would you like to say to the heavenly Father?" she asked.

"Tell him playing makes us happy," was the answer. So the group thanked the Father for the joy of playing and for the interesting games which children all over the world know. The teacher expects spontaneous prayer experiences to arise, and when they do, she helps the children to pray. She knows that worship is the climax of religious teaching.

Learning Children's Religious Ideas. Tom told his teacher one Sunday when a class prayer was being made, "I'd like to pray, but I don't know how to begin." David, when asked on another occasion how he would begin a prayer, suggested that it start, "Dear Father and Mother." He had written letters to his father and mother, who were then wintering in Florida. The idea of the heavenly Father was confused in his mind with his earthly father. Until that moment the teacher had not realized how very simply she must teach in order to help this third-grade child to gain a sense of the heavenly Father's reality.

Teachers will often learn just how developed the children's sense of God is while the class is working on a prayer. Some Primary children have had no training at all in prayer and are mystified by much that we say about God and by the prayers that we use, both in the class and in the department. They are more likely to ask questions that reveal their prayer problems in the class session than during the larger departmental assembly. It is wise for the Primary teacher to know the worship background of each child in her group. Probably the child in Chapter X who thought God punished by sending sickness had received a good deal of religious teaching, but it did not cause the Christian ideas of God to develop.

Correcting Unchristian Ideas. Once a Primary child said in an intimate moment: "I don't think God is good. He is not good like my mother. He drowned all the animals and all the little babies in the water and my mother would not do that." The first-grade teacher found that when this child was a beginner, the teacher had told him the story of the flood, dwelling on the sins of the people and their punishment, and saying little about the care of Noah. She had painted a picture of God utterly out of keeping with that of the Father of our Lord. Teachers will often have to correct unchristian ideas of God due to the thoughtless use of Old Testament stories with children too young to understand them. The safe rule seems to be to hold unfailingly to the New Testament ideas of God which Jesus taught. There will be time enough when the children have developed an historical sense to help them to understand and appreciate the developing revelation of God recorded in the Old Testament. The teacher is referred once more to Chapter I for guidance.

Telling God About Class Plans. The teacher will deepen the religious reason for activities if the children are led to tell God about their plans. If they have the idea that their efforts are pleasing to God and are helping to do his work in the world, they will desire to continue to help. If they are led to realize that God gives moral strength to carry on his work, they will be able better to solve problems of behavior in Christian ways.

Arousing a Desire to Pray. The teacher will not expect the children to pray unless there is a genuine experience which can come to its climax in prayer. The desire to pray must be aroused before there can be any meaningful prayer. The example of the teacher counts for a great deal. If she is in the habit of sharing her glad times with the Father and of going to him for help, her tone of voice in suggesting prayer will make telling God about what the class has done seem natural. Many teachers have to work under difficult conditions, teaching in the same room where other classes are in session. If the teacher is able to ignore what is going on in other classes, her very concentration is an example for the children. Class prayer will be more possible than if she allowed herself to become upset.

Teaching Prayers. The teacher may suggest forms of prayer. This does not mean that she should teach many riming prayers. The children often are puzzled about how to begin, what to pray about, and how to close a prayer. The Primary child likes to feel that he does a thing exactly in the proper way, so the teacher sets him free to think about what he is saying by helping him to master a simple form.

Class Prayers. Prayers may be developed by the entire class from time to time. They should be recorded in the class record book so that they are available for

use at other class periods. The teacher, by comparing these prayers at intervals, may see whether there is any growth in the ability to pray on a Christian level. A class prayer may also be shared with the department and accepted by the department as its own. This practice forms a helpful connection between the class and departmental worship.

The Bible in Class Worship. Not only does the Primary class worship through prayer, but also through the use of the Bible. When the group is memorizing a Bible passage, it will have more meaning if there should be class worship experiences connected with the teaching. The children will not wait until the departmental service to use the Bible passage worshipfully, for the mind does not respond in this way. The passage can have reverent meaning from the very beginning.

Hymns in the Class. A second grade went on a walk through a park, gorgeous with the beauties of spring. The park was near the church and the teacher had decided to teach outdoors instead of in the Primary room on this Sunday. The children were learning the hymn "'Tis God Who Sends the Spring." Because of their enjoyment of the springtime the children wished to tell the other Primary class how they felt. So the teacher suggested that they sing the song "'Tis God Who Sends the Spring" as a contribution to the departmental worship. A very real sense of worship developed while the song was being learned. The class prayer which followed the practice of the hymn marked the climax of a class session whose aim was to help the children to appreciate and share the beauties of the springtime. A Primary class does not always wait to know a hymn before they worship through its use. Often the very climax of the class worship will come while they are

learning some new hymn. Especially is this true if the song is closely connected in thought and feeling with a recent meaningful experience.

Poems, the words of hymns used as poems, pictures, and Bible verses may be used by the teacher to bring the session to a worshipful climax. The use of these materials in this way is discussed in the ninth and eleventh chapters of this book.

Connecting Departmental Worship With Class Purposes. A teacher led her children into discussion of wind and water as God's gifts and an appreciation for them by connecting the class activity—making blueprints—with the song "God's Work,"[5] which had been used in the worship that morning. Teachers may also connect the worship period of the department with the class activities by discussing the story, some hymn used in the service or some point brought up in the conversation. Often this discussion will lead naturally into the class plans for the morning.

The Departmental Leader's Contribution

When Working on a Single Enterprise. The Primary superintendent can also help to add worshipful meaning to the class plans and purposes. She will find this task much simpler now that the class sessions are no longer occupied mainly with the mastery or presentation of materials. The class groups may often work together on one large enterprise, each class doing its especial part of the task. Often a plan will develop in one class and grow in importance until every class in the department is working upon it. Since teachers are no longer expected to follow every plan in their text

[5] *Worship for Sunday School and Home—Primaries,* Clayton F. Summy Company.

books without change, but to use them as tools and sources of help, it is easy for such rearrangements to be made.

When Working on Different Plans. The departmental leader also unifies the work of the classes while they are working on separate units through her worship services. The leader may refer to stories and biblical materials and activities with which the children are occupied in classes. By using the materials again in the worship period or by having the children recall them she furnishes an additional chance to learn the material. She also adds new meaning to the class work itself by connecting it with the department worship.

The Worship Service a Climax to Class Plans. The leader who plans a worship service as a climax to important class enterprises adds just the proper touch of ritual to make the entire experience have a dramatic quality for children. Making religion dramatic is a very important element in teaching young children. At Thanksgiving the children bring their offering of fruit and canned goods and the leader receives the offering of each class at the close of an impressive Thanksgiving worship service. The giving has almost become a dramatization.

Class and Department Plans and General Worship Services

One Christmas a rural church school formed a line in the church yard and marched into the room singing, "O Come, All Ye Faithful." Even the Primary children knew the refrain. Then the superintendent read the Christmas story and the group sang, "Joy to the World." The pastor prayed, making definite reference to the way

each class group, even the little beginners, had tried to live the Christmas spirit. After another hymn the story "Why the Chimes Rang"[6] was told. Then the classes came to the altar, one by one, and each member placed upon it his offering, given for the sake of the Christ-child. An impressive and dramatic element was added to the service because few gave money, not having it to give. One farmer came, bent low under a large sack of potatoes. A woman brought a basket containing eggs from her hennery; another a box of canned goods for which she had first raised the vegetables in her garden. The children brought apples which they had watched ripen on the trees and which they had plucked and polished with their own hands. From the viewpoint of the young child this climax to Christmas plans was perfect, since it was dramatic and concrete. The life of that country community through the long months of sowing and reaping and gathering into barns was given religious meaning by the chance to bring gifts to the Christ-child.

So not only can the departmental leader help the children to make the connection between the departmental worship and class work, but the same connection can be made with the services of worship which come as climaxes to important plans of the entire church or church school. These are plans in which each age group has participated according to its abilities.

In Closing. It is interesting to remember that the ancient Hebrews unified life through their religious festivals, both in the Temple service and in the family worship. Every act of daily life was saturated with the presence of the Lord. No wonder that Jesus was born among such a people—the supreme example of a people

[6] Raymond McDonald Alden.

who acknowledged God as supreme. No wonder that three of the great religions of the world were their gifts to mankind.

The Protestant churches lack this dramatic, beautiful pageantry of religion and their children suffer from a rather colorless religious life. The ritual without the Christian activities will not make religion colorful, for much of it will be meaningless. Neither will the activity be complete without the dramatic worship service. The two must be made parts of one experience for the child. Somehow, even in the midst of a material-centered civilization, we may try to make our lives and our children's lives center beautifully and dramatically around that highest value for all life, fellowship with God.

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Weigle and Tweedy—*Training the Devotional Life,* Chapters I, II.
Boulting—*The Beautiful Childhood.*
Powell—*Worship in the Church School* (in preparation).
Myers—*What Is Religious Education?* pages 84-88.
Children's Prayers—By a Mother.
Mumford—*The Dawn of Character,* Chapter XII.
Cope—*Religious Education in the Church,* Chapter V.

APPENDIX A

A REFERENCE LIBRARY FOR THE PRIMARY TEACHER

On Method and Child Study

Reeder, *Simplifying Teaching.*
Shaver, *The Project Principle in Religious Education.*
Myers, *Teaching Religion.*
Myers, *What Is Religious Education?*
Hartshorne, **Childhood and Character.*
Coe, **A Social Theory of Religious Education.*
Bower, **The Curriculum of Religious Education.*
Mossman, *Teaching and Learning in the Elementary School.*
Moore, *The Primary School.*
Kilpatrick, **Foundations of Method.*
Vieth, *Teaching For Christian Living.*
Whitley, *A Study of the Primary Child.*
Mateer, *Just Normal Children.*
Thom, *Everyday Problems of the Everyday Child.*
Groves, *Wholesome Childhood.*
Stooker, *Missionary Education of Primaries.*

Special Method

Burke and others, *A Conduct Curriculum for the Kindergarten and First Grade.*
Troxell, *Language and Literature in the Kindergarten and Primary Grades.*
Thorn, *Music for Children.*
Mohler, *Teaching Music on an Appreciative Basis.*

Bonser and Mossman, *Industrial Arts In the Elementary School.*

Esenwein and Stockard, *Children's Stories and How to Tell Them.*

Sies, *Spontaneous and Supervised Play in Childhood.*

Blashfield, *Worship Training for Primary Children.*

Hurll, *How to Show Pictures to Children.*

* For More Advanced Study.

Books Furnishing Source Materials

Books for Bible Study

Van Dyke, *Out Doors in the Holy Land*—a very simple and charming description of Palestine in the time of the singing of birds.

Budden and Hastings, *Local Color in the Bible*—3 volumes—excellent source books for a more serious study of Bible customs and geography.

Knott, *A Student's History of the Hebrews.*

Geikie, *The Holy Land and the Bible*—2 volumes.

Smith, G. A., *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land.*

Crosby, *The Geography of Bible Lands*—a very simple study of biblical geography.

Goodspeed, *The Story of the New Testament.*

A good commentary such as The Abingdon Commentary.

Boulting, *The Beautiful Childhood.*

Books for Nature Study

Hammett, *Stars at a Glance.*

Little Nature Library—Butterflies; Birds; Wild Flowers; Trees.

Patch, *First Lessons in Nature Study.*

Comstock, *A Handbook of Nature Study.*

Children's Literature

Alice Dalgliesh, *A Selected List of Books for Young Children.* Published by Educational Playthings, Inc., 20 East 69th Street, New York City, price 35 cents.

Mahoney and Whitney, *Realms of God in Children's Books.* Doubleday, Doran & Company, price $5.

For World Friendship materials secure the yearly list of the Missionary Education Movement, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Thompson, *Silver Pennies.*

Stevenson, *A Child's Garden of Verse.*

Pictures

In addition to the teaching pictures furnished with the teacher's material pictures may be secured for class use from (see Bibliography of Chapter XI) and

Hale Cushman and Flint, 5 South Wabash Avenue, Mallers Building, Chicago, Illinois. (The Medici Prints including the Tarrant Pictures.)

Pictures of Indians of The Southwest. The Fred Harvey House, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Pictures of Northern Indian Tribes, Woods Indian Village, Portland, Oregon.

Children From Many Lands, National Child Welfare Association.

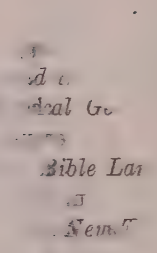
The American Singer Series, free for school use. Singer Sewing Machine Company.

Magazines

The denominational magazine for children's workers (if there is one. If not, consult your denominational children's worker regarding a helpful one).

Nature Magazine.

The National Geographic Magazine.



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